



A SELECTION OF ESSAYS,

080C.41
1125/20

1955

SECOND EDITION

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA,
1955



First Edition—1611 B.T.—July, 1946—J.
Reprint—1710 B.T.—May, 1949—J.
.. —1848 B.T.—March, 1954—Ce.

BCU 659

176 332



PRINTED IN INDIA

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY SIBENDRANATH KANJILAL,
SUPERINTENDENT, CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS,
48, HAZRA ROAD, BALLYGUNGE, CALCUTTA.

1896 B.T.—June, 1955—J.



CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Episode of the Spider and the Bee (<i>Jonathan Swift</i>)	1
2. Of Eloquence (<i>Oliver Goldsmith</i>)	7
3. The Superannuated Man (<i>Charles Lamb</i>) ...	16 •
4. On Going a Journey (<i>William Hazlitt</i>) ...	25
5. Discipline of Mind (<i>Cardinal Newman</i>) ...	38 •
6. John Stuart Mill: An Anniversary (<i>Viscount Morley</i>)	53
7. The Genius of Japanese Civilization (<i>Lafcadio Hearn</i>)	71
8. Popularity (<i>A. Clutton-Brock</i>)	90 •
9. Bores (<i>E. V. Lucas</i>)	99
10. Thoughts on Sleep (<i>E. V. Lucas</i>)	103
11. The World as it could be made (<i>Bertrand Russell</i>) ...	109
12. The Leaning Tower (<i>Virginia Woolf</i>)	129

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The University wishes to acknowledge its indebtedness to the following who have kindly given permission for the use of the copyright material contained in this volume:—

Executrix of the late Viscount Morley for “ John Stuart Mill: An Anniversary ”; The Publisher for “ The Genius of Japanese Civilization ”; Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, for “ Popularity ” from A. Clutton-Brock’s *Essays on Life*; Methuen & Co. Ltd., London, for “ Bores ” and “ Thoughts on Sleep ” by E. V. Lucas; The author and George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, for “ The World as it could be made ” from Bertrand Russell’s *Roads to Freedom*; “ Owner of the copyright ” for “ The Leaning Tower ” by Virginia Woolf.

A SELECTION OF ESSAYS

EPISODE OF THE SPIDER AND THE BEE

Things were at this crisis, when a material accident fell out. For, upon the highest corner of a large window, there dwelt a certain spider, swollen up to the first magnitude by the destruction of infinite numbers of flies, whose spoils lay scattered before the gates of his palace, like human bones before the cave of some giant. The avenues to his castle were guarded with turnpikes and palisadoes, all after the modern way of fortification. After you had passed several courts, you came to the centre, wherein you might behold the constable himself in his own lodgings, which had windows fronting to each avenue, and ports to sally out, upon all occasions of prey or defence. In this mansion he had for some time dwelt in peace and plenty, without danger to his person by swallows from above, or to his palace, by brooms from below; when it was the pleasure of fortune to conduct thither a wandering bee, to whose curiosity a broken pane in the glass had discovered itself, and in he went; where, expatiating a while, he at last happened to alight upon one of the outward walls of the spider's citadel; which, yielding to the unequal weight, sank down to the very foundation. Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook. The spider within, feeling the terrible convulsion, supposed at first that nature was approaching to her final dissolution; or else, that Beelzebub, with all his legions, was come to revenge the death of many thousands of his subjects, whom his enemy had slain and devoured. However, he at length valiantly resolved to issue forth, and meet his fate.

Meanwhile the bee had acquitted himself of his toils, and, posted securely at some distance, was employed in cleansing his wings, and disengaging them from the ragged remnants of the cobweb. By this time the spider was adventured when, beholding the chasms, the ruins, and dilapidations of his fortress, he was very near at his wit's end; he stormed and swore like a madman, and swelled till he was ready to burst. At length, casting his eye upon the bee, and wisely gathering causes from events, (for they knew each other by sight): "A plague split you," said he, "for a giddy son of a whore. Is it you, with a vengeance, that have made this litter here? Could not you look before you, and be d—d? Do you think I have nothing else to do (in the devil's name) but to mend and repair after your arse?"—"Good words, friend," said the bee, (having now pruned himself, and being disposed to droll,) "I'll give you my hand and word to come near your kennel no more; I was never in such a confounded pickle since I was born."—"Sirrah," replied the spider, "if it were not for breaking an old custom in our family, never to stir abroad against an enemy, I should come and teach you better manners."—"I pray have patience," said the bee, "or you'll spend your substance, and, for aught I see, you may stand in need of it all, toward the repair of your house."—"Rogue, rogue," replied the spider, "yet, methinks you should have more respect to a person, whom all the world allows to be so much your betters."—"By my troth," said the bee, "the comparison will amount to a very good jest, and you will do me a favour to let me know the reasons that all the world is pleased to use in so hopeful a dispute." At this the spider, having swelled himself into the size and posture of a disputant, began his argument in the true spirit of controversy, with resolution to be heartily scurrilous and angry, to urge on his own reasons, without the least regard to

the answers or objections of his opposite, and fully predetermined in his mind against all conviction.

“Not to disparage myself,” said he, “by the comparison of such a rascal, what art thou but a vagabond without house or home, without stock or inheritance? Born to no possession of your own, but a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. Your livelihood is a universal plunder upon nature; a freebooter over fields and gardens; and, for the sake of stealing, will rob a nettle as easily as a violet. Whereas I am a domestic animal, furnished with a native stock within myself. This large castle (to shew my improvements in the mathematics) is all built with my own hands, and the materials extracted altogether out of my own person.”

“I am glad,” answered the bee, “to hear you grant at least that I am come honestly by my wings and my voice; for then, it seems, I am obliged to Heaven alone for my flights and my music; and Providence would never have bestowed on me two such gifts, without designing them for the noblest ends. I visit indeed all the flowers and blossoms of the field and garden; but whatever I collect thence, enriches myself, without the least injury to their beauty, their smell, or their taste. Now, for you and your skill in architecture, and other mathematics, I have little to say: In that building of yours there might, for aught I know, have been labour and method enough; but, by woful experience for us both, it is plain, the materials are naught, and I hope you will henceforth take warning, and consider duration and matter, as well as method and art. You boast, indeed, of being obliged to no other creature, but of drawing and spinning out all from yourself; that is to say if we may judge of the liquor in the vessel by what issues out, you possess a good plentiful store of dirt and poison in your breast; and, though I would by no means lessen or disparage your

genuine stock of either, yet, I doubt you are somewhat obliged, for an increase of both, to a little foreign assistance. Your inherent portion of dirt does not fail of acquisitions, by sweepings exhaled from below; and one insect furnishes you with a share of poison to destroy another. So that, in short, the question comes all to this—Whether is the nobler being of the two, that which, by a lazy contemplation of four inches round, by an overweening pride, feeding and engendering on itself, turns all into excrement and venom, producing nothing at all, but flybane and a cobweb; or that which, by a universal range, with long search, much study, true judgment, and distinction of things, brings home honey and wax."

This dispute was managed with such eagerness, clamour, and warmth, that the two parties of books, in arms below, stood silent a while, waiting in suspense what would be the issue, which was not long undetermined: For the bee, grown impatient at so much loss of time, fled straight away to a bed of roses, without looking for a reply, and left the spider, like an orator, collected in himself, and just prepared to burst out.

It happened upon this emergency, that Æsop broke silence first. He had been of late most barbarously treated by a strange effect of the regent's humanity, who had tore off his title-page, sorely defaced one half of his leaves, and chained him fast among a shelf of Moderns. Where, soon discovering how high the quarrel was likely to proceed, he tried all his arts, and turned himself to a thousand forms. At length, in the borrowed shape of an ass, the regent mistook him for a Modern; by which means he had time and opportunity to escape to the Ancients, just when the spider and the bee were entering into their contest, to which he gave his attention with a world of pleasure; and when it was ended, swore in the loudest key, that in all his life he had never known two cases so parallel and adapt to

each other, as that in the window, and this upon the shelves. "The disputants," said he, "have admirably managed the dispute between them, have taken in the full strength of all that is to be said on both sides, and exhausted the substance of every argument *pro* and *con*. It is but to adjust the reasonings of both to the present quarrel, then to compare and apply the labours and fruits of each, as the bee has learnedly deduced them, and we shall find the conclusion fall plain and close upon the Moderns and us. For, pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns, and his paradoxes? He argues in the behalf of you his brethren and himself, with many boastings of his native stock and great genius; that he spins and spits wholly from himself, and scorns to own any obligation or assistance from without. Then he displays to you his great skill in architecture, and improvement in the mathematics. To all this the bee, as an advocate, retained by us the Ancients, thinks fit to answer—that, if one may judge of the great genius or inventions of the Moderns by what they have produced, you will hardly have countenance to bear you out, in boasting of either. Erect your schemes with as much method and skill as you please; yet if the materials be nothing but dirt, spun out of your own entrails (the guts of modern brains) the edifice will conclude at last in a cobweb, the duration of which, like that of other spiders' webs, may be imputed to their being forgotten, or neglected, or hid in a corner. For anything else of genuine that the Moderns may pretend to, I cannot recollect; unless it be a large vein of wrangling and satire, much of a nature and substance with the spider's poison; which, however they pretend to spit wholly out of themselves, is improved by the same arts, by feeding upon the insects and vermin of the age. As for us the Ancients, we are content, with the bee, to pretend to nothing of our own,

beyond our wings and our voice, that is to say, our flights and our language. For the rest, whatever we have got, has been by infinite labour and search, and ranging through every corner of nature; the difference is, that, instead of dirt and poison, we have rather chosen to fill our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."

(From *The Battle of the Books*)

—Jonathan Swift.

OF ELOQUENCE

Of all kinds of success, that of an orator is the most pleasing. Upon other occasions, the applause we deserve is conferred in our absence, and we are insensible of the pleasure we have given; but in eloquence, the victory and the triumph are inseparable. We read our own glory in the face of every spectator, the audience is moved, the antagonist is defeated, and the whole circle bursts into unsolicited applause.

The rewards which attend excellence in this way are so pleasing, that numbers have written professed treatises to teach us the art; schools have been established with no other intent; rhetoric has taken place among the institutions; and pedants have ranged under proper heads, and distinguished with long learned names, *some* of the strokes of nature, or of passion, which orators have used. I say only *some*, for a folio volume could not contain all the figures which have been used by the truly eloquent; and scarce a good speaker or writer but makes use of some that are peculiar or new.

Eloquence has preceded the rules of rhetoric, as languages have been formed before grammar. Nature renders men eloquent in great interests, or great passions. He that is sensibly touched, sees things with a very different eye from the rest of mankind. All nature to him becomes an object of comparison and metaphor; without attending to it; he throws life into all, and inspires his audience with a part of his own enthusiasm.

It has been remarked, that the lower parts of mankind generally express themselves most figuratively; and that tropes are found in the most ordinary forms of conversation. Thus,

in every language the heart burns; the courage is roused; the eyes sparkle; the spirits are cast down; passion inflames, pride swells, and pity sinks the soul. Nature, everywhere, speaks in those strong images, which, from their frequency, pass unnoticed.

Nature it is which inspires those rapturous enthusiasms, those irresistible turns; a strong passion, a pressing danger, calls up all the imagination, and gives the orator irresistible force. Thus, a captain of the first caliphs, seeing his soldiers fly, cried out, ' Whither do you run ? the enemy are not there ! You have been told that the caliph is dead; but God is still living. He regards the brave, and will reward the courageous. Advance ! '

A man, therefore, may be called eloquent, who transfers the passion or sentiment with which he is moved himself into the breast of another; and this definition appears the more just, as it comprehends the graces of silence, and of action. An intimate persuasion of the truth to be proved, is the sentiment and passion to be transferred; and who effects this is truly possessed of the talent of eloquence.

I have called eloquence a talent, and not an art, as so many rhetoricians have done, as art is acquired by exercise and study, and eloquence is the gift of nature. Rules will never make either a work or a discourse eloquent; they only serve to prevent faults, but not to introduce beauties; to prevent those passages which are truly eloquent and dictated by nature from being blended with others which might disgust or, at least, abate our passion.

What we clearly conceive, says Boileau, we can clearly express. I may add, that what is felt with emotion, is expressed also with the same movements; the words rise as readily to paint our emotions as to express our thoughts with perspicuity.

The cool care an orator takes to express passions which he does not feel, only prevents his rising into that passion he would seem to feel. In a word, to feel your subject thoroughly, and to speak without fear, are the only rules of eloquence, properly so called, which I can offer. Examine a writer of genius on the most beautiful parts of his work, and he will always assure you that such passages are generally those which have given him the least trouble, for they came as if by inspiration. To pretend that cold and didactic precepts will make a man eloquent, is only to prove that he is incapable of eloquence.

But, as in being perspicuous it is necessary to have a full idea of the subject, so in being eloquent it is not sufficient, if I may so express it, to feel by halves. The orator should be strongly impressed, which is generally the effect of a fine and exquisite sensibility, and not that transient and superficial emotion, which he excites in the greatest part of his audience. It is even impossible to affect the hearers in any great degree without being affected ourselves. In vain it will be objected, that many writers have had the art to inspire their readers with a passion for virtue without being virtuous themselves, since it may be answered, that sentiments of virtue filled their minds at the time they were writing. They felt the inspiration strongly, while they praised justice, generosity, or good nature; but, unhappily for them, these passions might have been discontinued when they laid down the pen. In vain will it be objected again, that we can move without being moved, as we can convince without being convinced. It is much easier to deceive our reason than ourselves; a trifling defect in reasoning may be overseen, and lead a man astray; for it requires reason and time to detect the falsehood; but our passions are not easily imposed upon,—our eyes, our ears, and every sense, are watchful to detect the imposture.

No discourse can be eloquent that does not elevate the mind. Pathetic eloquence, it is true, has for its only object to affect; but I appeal to men of sensibility, whether their pathetic feelings are not accompanied with some degree of elevation. We may then call eloquence and sublimity the same thing, since it is impossible to be one, without feeling the other. From hence it follows, that we may be eloquent in any language, since no language refuses to paint those sentiments with which we are thoroughly impressed. What is usually called sublimity of style, seems to be only an error. Eloquence is not in the words, but in the subject; and in great concerns, the more simply anything is expressed, it is generally the more sublime. True eloquence does not consist, as the rhetoricians assure us, in saying great things in a sublime style, but in a simple style; for there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a sublime style, the sublimity lies only in the things; and when they are not so, the language may be turgid, affected, metaphorical, but not affecting.

What can be more simply expressed, than the following extract from a celebrated preacher, and yet what was ever more sublime? Speaking of the small number of the elect, he breaks out thus among his audience: 'Let me suppose that this was the last hour of us all; that the heavens were opening over our heads; that time was passed, and eternity begun; that Jesus Christ in all His glory, that man of sorrows in all His glory, appeared on the tribunal, and that we were assembled here to receive our final decree of life or death eternal! Let me ask, impressed with terror like you, and not separating my lot from yours, but putting myself in the same situation in which we must all one day appear before God, our judge,—let me ask, if Jesus Christ should now appear to make the terrible separation of the just from the unjust, do you think the greatest

number would be saved ? Do you think the number of the elect would even be equal to that of the sinners ? Do you think, if all our works were examined with justice, would He find ten just persons in this great assembly ? Monsters of ingratitude, would He find one ? ' Such passages as these, are sublime in every language. The expression may be less striking, or more indistinct, but the greatness of the idea still remains. In a word, we may be eloquent in every language and in every style, since elocution is only an assistant, but not a constitutor of eloquence.

Of what use, then, will it be said, are all the precepts given us upon this head, both by the ancients and moderns ? I answer, that they cannot make us eloquent, but they will certainly prevent us from becoming ridiculous. They can seldom procure a single beauty, but they may banish a thousand faults. The true method of an orator is not to attempt always to move, always to affect, to be continually sublime, but at proper intervals to give rest both to his own and the passions of his audience. In these periods of relaxation, or of preparation rather, rules may teach him to avoid anything low, trivial, or disgusting. Thus criticism, properly speaking, is intended not to assist those parts which are sublime, but those which are naturally mean and humble, which are composed with coolness and caution, and where the orator rather endeavours not to offend than attempts to please.

I have hitherto insisted more strenuously on that eloquence which speaks to the passions, as it is a species of oratory almost unknown in England. At the bar it is quite discontinued, and, I think, with justice. In the senate it is used but sparingly, as the orator speaks to enlightened judges. But in the pulpit, in which the orator should chiefly address the vulgar, it seems strange that it should be entirely laid aside.

The vulgar of England are, without exception, the most barbarous and the most unknowing of any in Europe. A great part of their ignorance may be chiefly ascribed to their teachers, who, with the most pretty gentleman-like serenity, deliver their cool discourses, and address the reason of men who have never reasoned in all their lives. They are told of cause and effect, of beings self-existent, and the universal scale of beings. The spruce preacher reads his lucubration without lifting his nose from the text, and never ventures to earn the shame of an enthusiast.

By this means, though his audience feel not one word of all he says, he earns, however, among his acquaintance, the character of a man of sense; among his acquaintance only, did I say? nay, even with his bishop.

The polite of every country have several motives to induce them to a rectitude of action.—the love of virtue for its own sake, the shame of offending, and the desire of pleasing. The vulgar have but one, the enforcements of religion; and yet those who should push this motive home to their hearts, are basely found to desert their post. They speak to the squire, the philosopher, and the pedant; but the poor, those who really want instruction, are left uninstructed.

I have attended most of our pulpit orators, who, it must be owned, write extremely well upon the text they assume. To give them their due also, they read their sermons with elegance and propriety, but this goes but a very short way in true eloquence. The speaker must be moved. In this, in this alone, our English divines are deficient. Were they to speak to a few calm, dispassionate hearers, they certainly use the properest methods of address; but their audience is chiefly composed of the poor, who must be influenced by motives of reward and punishment, and whose only virtues lie in self-interest or fear.

How then are such to be addressed ? not by studied periods, or cold disquisitions; not by the labours of the head, but the honest spontaneous dictates of the heart. Neither writing a sermon with regular periods and all the harmony of elegant expression; neither reading it with emphasis, propriety, and deliberation; neither pleasing with metaphor, simile, or rhetorical fustian; neither arguing coolly, and untying consequences united in *a priori*, nor bundling up inductions *a posteriori*; neither pedantic jargon, nor academical trifling, can persuade the poor. Writing a discourse coolly in the closet, then getting it by memory, and delivering it on Sundays, even that will not do. What then is to be done ? I know of no expedient to speak—to speak at once intelligibly and feelingly—except to understand the language—to be convinced of the truth of the object—to be perfectly acquainted with the subject in view—to prepossess yourself with a low opinion of your audience—and to do the rest extempore. By this means strong expressions, new thoughts, rising passions, and the true declamatory style will naturally ensue.

Fine declamation does not consist in flowery periods, delicate allusions, or musical cadences; but in a plain, open, loose style, where the periods are long and obvious; where the same thought is often exhibited in several points of view; all this strong sense, a good memory, and a small share of experience will furnish to every orator; and without these a clergyman may be called a fine preacher, a judicious preacher, and a man of good sense; he may make his hearers admire his understanding, but will seldom enlighten theirs.

When I think of the Methodist preachers among us, how seldom they are endued with common sense, and yet how often and how justly they affect their hearers, I cannot avoid saying within myself, Had these been bred gentlemen, and been endued

with even the meanest share of understanding, what might they not effect! Did our bishops, who can add dignity to their expostulations, testify the same fervour, and *entreat* their hearers, as well as *argue*, what might not be the consequence!

Tillotson has been commended as the model of pulpit eloquence; thus far he should be imitated, where he generally strives to convince, rather than to please: but to adopt his long, dry, and sometimes tedious discussions, which serve to amuse only divines, and are utterly neglected by the generality of mankind—to praise the intricacy of his periods, which are too long to be spoken,—to continue his cool phlegmatic manner of enforcing every truth,—is certainly erroneous. As I said before, the good preacher should adopt no model, write no sermons, study no periods; let him but understand his subject, the language he speaks, and be convinced of the truths he delivers. It is amazing to what heights eloquence of this kind may reach! This is that eloquence the ancients represented as lightning, bearing down every opposer; this the power which has turned whole assemblies into astonishment, admiration, and awe: that is described by the torrent, the flame, and every other instance of irresistible impetuosity.

• But to attempt such noble heights, belongs only to the truly great, or the truly good. To discard the lazy manner of reading sermons, or speaking sermons by rote; to set up singly against the opposition of men who are attached to their own errors, and to endeavour to be great, instead of being prudent, are qualities we seldom see united. A minister of the Church of England, who may be possessed of good sense and some hopes of preferment, will seldom give up such substantial advantages for the empty pleasure of improving society. By his present method he is liked by his friends, admired by his dependants, not displeasing to his bishop; he lives as well,

eats and sleeps as well, as if a real orator, and an eager asserter of his mission; he will hardly, therefore, venture all this to be called, perhaps, an enthusiast; nor will he depart from customs established by the brotherhood, when, by such a conduct, he only singles himself out for their contempt.

—*Oliver Goldsmith*

✓ THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

If peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six-and-thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant playtime, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours a-day attendance at the counting-house. H.C. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks toy and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, trifles which make a week-day saunter of walks through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man



who contemplates them ever passing by—the very place of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little trades-folks, with here and there a servant-maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour; and lively expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the field on that day look anything but comfortable.

4. But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was made a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom. *dudgers*

5. Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over

again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.

6. My fellows in the office would sometimes ^{mock at} rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the fifth of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L—, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock), I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought now my time is surely come; I have done for myself; I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L—, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when, to my utter astonishment, B—, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on

dwell on

the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!), and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer: I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. 'This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy.

Esto Perpetua! may the firm last for e

7. For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastille, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have all his Time to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there

may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first ^{dizzy excessive delirious} giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do not walk all day long as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away; but I do not read in that violent measure with which, having no time my own but candle-light Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in by-gone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now), just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure: I let it come to me. I am like the man

—that's born, and has his years come to him

In some green desert.

9. 'Years!' you will say; 'what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty.'

9. I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's Time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

10 Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting-house. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom

I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:

—'Twas but just now he went away;
I have not since had time to shed a tear;
And yet the distance does the same appear
As if he had been a thousand years from me.
Time takes no measure in Eternity.

11. To ^{remove} dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D—l take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six-and-thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged, then, after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch—, dry,

permission

176332



all
 say
 as
 Richard
 of
 ng
 age
 as
 as
 cloak
 12.
 K
 sarcastic, and friendly! Do—mild, slow to move, and gentle-
 manly! Pl—, ^{office services} officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!
 and thou, thou dreary ^{man of building} pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a
Whittington of old, stately house of Merchants; with thy
labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, ^{confined} pent-up offices, where
 candles for one-half the year supplied the place of the sun's
 light; unhealthy contributor to my ^{welfare} weal, stern ^{contributor} fosterer of my
 living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure
 collection of some wandering bookseller, my 'works!' There let
 them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massive shelves,
 more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful!
 My mantle I bequeath among ye. ^{leave}

A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communi-
 cation. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had
 not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was compara-
 tive only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling
 sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed
 light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been
 some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian,
 from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution return-
 ed upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than
 my own master. It is natural for me to go where I please, to
 do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day
 in Bond Street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering
 there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho,
 to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a
 collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find
 myself before a fine picture in the morning. Was it ever
 otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill? Where is
Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane, which I have
 worn with my daily pilgrimage for six-and-thirty years, to the
 footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now

Stones

trud along
vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change *bu
ho
th
E* time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post-days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, etc. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sat as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white? What is gone of Black Monday? All days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday, as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week-day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge candle *S* which it used to seem to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May morning. It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed



useless article
cotton-mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl *thro*
it down

(Hamlet) As low as to the fiends. *devils*

qui 5
done I am no longer * * * * * clerk to the Firm of, etc. I am
Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am
already come to be known by my vacant face and careless
gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled
purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me a
certain cum dignitate air, that has been buried so long with my
other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I
grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper,
it is to read the state of the opera. Opus operatum est. I have
done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked
task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

—Charles Lamb

ON GOING A JOURNEY

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out-of-doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

“ The fields his study, nature was his book.”

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude: nor do I ask for

“ a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.”

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on different matters, where contemplation

“ May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,”

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me

have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like “sunken wrack and sumless treasures,” burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them.

“Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!” I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me “very stuff of the conscience.” Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. “Out upon such half-faced fellowship,” say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or

solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briers and thorns of controversy. For once I like to have it all my own way, and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and

take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and, on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must “give it an understanding, but no tongue.” My old friend Coleridge, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer’s day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. “He talked far above singing.” If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have someone with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had “that fine madness in them which our first poets had”; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:

“ Here be woods as green
 As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
 As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
 Face of the curled stream, with flow’rs as many
 As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
 Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
 Arbours o’ergreen with woodbines, caves and dells;

Choose where thou wilt, while I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."

' Faithful Shepherdess.'

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds: but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot: I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. Lamb is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out-of-doors; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of night-fall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then, after enquiring for the best entertainment



that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea—

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul, este profani!* These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint

of your profession and pursuits; or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord of one's-self, uncumber'd with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour*! One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world; and inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure

of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention, luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read Paul and Virginia, which I picked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the New Eloise, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in the town we

despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world, in our conceit of it, is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population, known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot, as it were, unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember the circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten!—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary,

for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

"With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd"—

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Ciceroni that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In

such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else: but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connexions. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright

existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings:

“ Out of my country and myself I go.”

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them: but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!—

—*William Hazlitt*

DISCIPLINE OF MIND*

Gentlemen, within the last thirty years, there has been, as you know, a great movement in behalf of the extension of knowledge among those classes in society whom you represent. This movement has issued in the establishment of what have been called Mechanics' Institutes through the United Kingdom; and a new species of literature has been brought into existence, with a view, among its objects, of furnishing the members of these institutions with interesting and instructive reading. I never will deny to that literature its due praise. It has been the production of men of the highest ability and the most distinguished station, who have not grudged, moreover, the trouble, and, I may say in a certain sense, the condescension, of presenting themselves before the classes for whose intellectual advancement they were showing so laudable a zeal; who have not grudged, in the cause of Literature, History, or Science, to make a display, in the lecture room or the public hall, of that eloquence, which was, strictly speaking, the property, as I may call it, of Parliament, or of the august tribunals of the Law. Nor will I deny to the speaking and writing, to which I am referring, the merit of success, as well as that of talent and good intention, so far as this,—that it has provided a fund of innocent amusement and information for the leisure hours of those who might otherwise have been exposed to the temptation of corrupt reading or bad company.

* From an Address delivered to the Evening classes, November, 1858.

So much may be granted,—and must be granted in candour: but, when I go on to ask myself the question, what permanent advantage the mind gets by such desultory reading and hearing, as this literary movement encourages, then I find myself altogether in a new field of thought, and am obliged to return an answer less favourable than I could wish to those who are the advocates of it. We must carefully distinguish, Gentlemen, between the mere diversion of the mind and its real education. Supposing, for instance, I am tempted to go into some society which will do me harm, and supposing, instead, I fall asleep in my chair, and so let the time pass by, in that case certainly I escape the danger, but it is as if by accident, and my going to sleep has not had any real effect upon me, or made me more able to resist the temptation on some future occasion. I wake, and I am what I was before. The opportune sleep has but removed the temptation for this once. It has not made me better; for I have not been shielded from temptation by any act of my own, but I was passive under an accident, for such I may call sleep. And so in like manner, if I hear a lecture indolently and passively, I cannot indeed be elsewhere *while* I am here hearing it,—but it produces no positive effect on my mind,—it does not tend to create any power in my breast capable of resisting temptation by its own vigour, should temptation come a second time.

Now this is no fault, Gentlemen, of the books or the lectures of the Mechanics' Institute. They could not do more than they do, from their very nature. They do their part, but their part is not enough. A man may hear a thousand lectures, and read a thousand volumes, and be at the end of the process very much where he was, as regards knowledge. Something more than merely admitting it in a negative way into the mind is necessary, if it is to remain there. It must not be passively

received, but actually and actively entered into, embraced, mastered. The mind must go half-way to meet what comes to it from without.

This, then, is the point in which the institutions I am speaking of fail; here, on the contrary, is the advantage of such lectures as you are attending, Gentlemen, in our University. You have come, not merely to be taught, but to learn. You have come to exert your minds. You have come to make what you hear your own, by putting out your hand, as it were, to grasp it and appropriate it. You do not come merely to hear a lecture, or to read a book, but you come for that catechetical instruction, which consists in a sort of conversation between your lecturer and you. He tells you a thing, and he asks you to repeat it after him. He questions you, he examines you, he will not let you go till he has proof, not only that you have heard, but that you know.

Gentlemen, I am induced to quote here some remarks of my own, which I put into print on occasion of those Evening Lectures, already referred to, with which we introduced the first terms of the University. The attendance upon them was not large, and in consequence we discontinued them for a time, but I attempted to explain in print what the object of them had been; and while what I then said is pertinent to the subject I am now pursuing, it will be an evidence too, in addition to my opening remarks, of the hold which the idea of these Evening Lectures has had upon me.

"I will venture to give you my thoughts," I then said, writing to a friend, "on the *object* of the Evening Public Lectures lately delivered in the University House, which, I think, has been misunderstood.

"I can bear witness, not only to their remarkable merit as lectures, but also to the fact that they were very satisfactorily

attended. Many, however, attach a vague or unreasonable idea to the word 'satisfactory,' and maintain that no lectures can be called satisfactory which do not make a great deal of noise in the place, and they are disappointed otherwise. This is what I mean by misconceiving their object; for such an expectation, and consequent regret, arise from confusing the ordinary with the extraordinary object of a lecture,—upon which point we ought to have clear and definite ideas.

“ The ordinary object of lectures is to teach; but there is an object, sometimes demanding attention, and not incongruous, which, nevertheless, cannot be said properly to belong to them, or to be more than occasional. As there are kinds of eloquence which do not aim at any thing beyond their own exhibition, and are content with being eloquent, and with the sensation which eloquence creates; so in Schools and Universities there are seasons, festive or solemn, anyhow extraordinary, when academical acts are not directed towards their proper ends, so much as intended to amuse, to astonish, and to attract, and thus to have an effect upon public opinion. Such are the exhibition days of Colleges; such the annual Commemoration of Benefactors at one of the English Universities, when Doctors put on their gayest gowns, and Public Orators make Latin Speeches. Such, too, are the Terminal Lectures, at which divines of the greatest reputation for intellect and learning have before now poured forth sentences of burning eloquence into the ears of an audience brought together for the very sake of the display. The object of all such Lectures and Orations is to excite or to keep up an interest and reverence in the public mind for the Institutions from which the exhibition proceeds: ”—I might have added, such are the lectures delivered by celebrated persons in Mechanics' Institutes.

I continue: "Such we have suitably had in the new University;—such were the Inaugural Lectures. Displays of strength and skill of this kind, in order to succeed, *should* attract attention, and if they do not attract attention, they have failed. They do not invite an audience, but an attendance; and perhaps it is hardly too much to say that they are intended for seeing rather than for hearing.

"Such celebrations, however, from the nature of the case, must be rare. It is the novelty which brings, it is the excitement which recompenses, the assemblage. The academical body which attempts to make such extraordinary acts the normal condition of its proceedings, is putting itself and its Professors in a false position.

"It is, then, a simple misconception to suppose that those to whom the government of our University is confided have aimed at an object, which could not be contemplated at all without a confusion or inadvertence, such as no considerate person will impute to them. Public lectures, delivered with such an object, could not be successful; and, in consequence, our late lectures have, I cannot doubt (for it could not be otherwise), ended unsatisfactorily in the judgment of any zealous person who has assumed for them an office with which their projectors never invested them.

"What their object really was the very meaning of academical institutions suggests to us. It is, as I said when I began, to teach. Lectures are, properly speaking, not exhibitions or exercises of art, but matters of business; they profess to impart something definite to those who attend them, and those who attend them profess on their part to receive what the lecturer has to offer. It is a case of contract:—'I will speak, if you will listen:—' 'I will come here to learn, if you have any thing worth teaching me.' In an oratorical

display, all the effort is on one side; in a lecture, it is shared between two parties, who co-operate towards a common end.

“ There should be ever something, on the face of the arrangements, to act as a memento that those who come, come to gain something, and not from mere curiosity. And in matter of fact, such were the persons who did attend, in the course of last term, and such as those, and no others, will attend. Those came who wished to gain information on a subject new to them, from informants whom they held in consideration, and regarded as authorities. It was impossible to survey the audience which occupied the lecture-room without seeing that they came on what may be called business. And this is why I said, when I began, that the attendance was satisfactory. That attendance is satisfactory,—not which is numerous, but—which is steady and persevering. But it is plain, that to a mere bystander, who came merely from general interest or good will to see how things were going on, and who did not catch the object of advertising the Lectures, it would not occur to look into the faces of the audience; he would think it enough to be counting their heads; he would do little more than observe whether the staircase and landing were full of loungers, and whether there was such a noise and bustle that it was impossible to hear a word; and if he could get in and out of the room without an effort, if he could sit at his ease, and actually hear the lecture, he would think he had sufficient grounds for considering the attendance unsatisfactory.

“ The stimulating system may easily be overdone, and does not answer on the long run. A blaze among the stubble, and then all is dark. I have seen in my time various instances of the way in which Lectures really gain upon the public; and I must express my opinion that, even were it the sole object of our great undertaking to make a general impression upon public

opinion, instead of that of doing definite good to definite persons, I should reject that method, which the University indeed itself has *not* taken, but which young and ardent minds may have thought the more promising. Even did I wish merely to get the intellect of all Dublin into our rooms, I should not dream of doing it all at once, but at length. I should not rely on sudden, startling effects, but on the slow, silent, penetrating, overpowering effects of patience, steadiness, routine, and perseverance. I have known individuals set themselves down in a neighbourhood where they had no advantages, and in a place which had no pretensions, and upon a work which had little or nothing of authoritative sanction; and they have gone on steadily lecturing week after week, with little encouragement, but much resolution. For months they were ill attended, and overlooked in the bustle of the world around them. But there was a secret, gradual movement going on, and a specific force of attraction, and a drifting and accumulation of hearers, which at length made itself felt, and could not be mistaken. In this stage of things, a friend said in conversation to me, when at the moment I knew nothing of the parties: 'By-the-Bye, if you are interested in such and such a subject, go by all means, and hear such a one. So and so does, and says there is no one like him. I looked in myself the other night, and was very much struck. Do go, you can't mistake; he lectures every Tuesday night, or Wednesday, or Thursday,' as it might be. An influence thus gradually acquired endures; sudden popularity dies away as suddenly.

As regards ourselves, the time is passed now, Gentlemen, for such modesty of expectation, and such caution in encouragement, as these last sentences exhibit. The few, but diligent, attendants upon the Professors' lectures, with whom we began, have grown into the diligent and zealous many; and the speedy

fulfilment of anticipations, which then seemed to be hazardous, surely is a call on us to cherish bolder hopes and to form more extended plans for the years which are to follow.

You will ask me, perhaps, after these general remarks, to suggest to you the particular intellectual benefit which I conceive students have a right to require of us, and which we engage by means of our evening classes to provide for them. And, in order to do this, you must allow me to make use of an illustration, which I have heretofore employed, and which I repeat here, because it is the best that I can find to convey what I wish to impress upon you. It is an illustration which includes in its application all of us, teachers as well as taught, though it applies of course to some more than to others, and to those especially who come for instruction.

I consider, then, that the position of our minds, as far as they are uncultivated, towards intellectual objects,—I mean of our minds, before they have been disciplined and formed by the action of our reason upon them,—is analogous to that of a blind man towards the objects of vision, at the moment when eyes are for the first time given to him by the skill of the operator. Then the multitude of things, which present themselves to the sight under a multiplicity of shapes and hues, pour in upon him from the external world all at once, and are at first nothing else but lines and colours, without mutual connection, dependence, or contrast, without order or principle, without drift or meaning, and like the wrong side of a piece of tapestry or carpet. By degrees, by the sense of touch, by reaching out the hands, by walking into this maze of colours, by turning round in it, by accepting the principle of perspective, by the various slow teaching of experience, the first information of the sight is corrected, and what was an unintelligible wilderness becomes a landscape or a scene, and is understood

to consist of space, and of bodies variously located in space, with such consequences as thence necessarily follow. The knowledge is at length gained of things or objects, and of their relation to each other; and it is a kind of knowledge, as is plain, which is forced upon us all from infancy, as to the blind on their first seeing, by the testimony of our other senses, and by the very necessity of supporting life; so that even the brute animals have been gifted with the faculty of acquiring it.

Such is the case as regards material objects; and it is much the same as regards intellectual. I mean that there is a vast host of matters of all kinds, which address themselves, not to the eye, but to our mental sense; *viz.*, all those matters of thought which, in the course of life and the intercourse of society, are brought before us, which we hear of in conversation, which we read of in books; matters political, social, ecclesiastical, literary, domestic; persons, and their doings or their writings; events, and works, and undertakings, and laws, and institutions. These make up a much more subtle and intricate world than that visible universe of which I was just now speaking. It is much more difficult in this world than in the material to separate things off from each other, and to find out how they stand related to each other, and to learn how to class them, and where to locate them respectively. Still, it is not less true that, as the various figures and forms in a landscape have each its own place, and stand in this or that direction towards each other, so all the various objects which address the intellect have severally a substance of their own, and have fixed relations each of them with everything else,—relations which our minds have no power of creating, but which we are obliged to ascertain before we have a right to boast that we really know any thing about them. Yet, when the mind looks out for the first time into this manifold spiritual world, it is

just as much confused and dazzled and distracted as are the eyes of the blind when they first begin to see; and it is by a long process, and with much effort and anxiety, that we begin hardly and partially to apprehend its various contents and to put each in its proper place.

We grow up from boyhood; our minds open; we go into the world; we hear what men say, or read what they put in print; and thus a profusion of matters of all kinds is discharged upon us. Some sort of an idea we have of most of them, from hearing what others say; but it is a very vague idea, probably a very mistaken idea. Young people, especially, because they are young, colour the assemblage of persons and things which they encounter with the freshness and grace of their own springtide, look for all good from the reflection of their own hopefulness, and worship what they have created. Men of ambition, again, look upon the world as a theatre for fame and glory, and make it that magnificent scene of high enterprise and august recompence which Pinder or Cicero has delineated. Poets, too, after their wont, put their ideal interpretation upon all things, material as well as moral, and substitute the noble for the true. Here are various obvious instances, suggestive of the discipline which is imperative, if the mind is to grasp things as they are, and to discriminate substances from shadows. For I am not concerned merely with youth, ambition, or poetry, but with our mental condition generally. It is the fault of all of us, till we have duly practised our minds, to be unreal in our sentiments and crude in our judgments, and to be carried off by fancies, instead of being at the trouble of acquiring sound knowledge.

In consequence, when we hear opinions put forth on any new subject, we have no principle to guide us in balancing them; we do not know what to make of them; we turn them to and



fro, and over, and back again, as if to pronounce upon them, if we could, but with no means of pronouncing. It is the same when we attempt to speak upon them: we make some random venture; or we take up the opinion of some one else, which strikes our fancy; or perhaps, with the vaguest enunciation possible of any opinion at all, we are satisfied with ourselves, if we are merely able to throw off some rounded sentences, to make some pointed remarks on some other subject, or to introduce some figure of speech, or flowers of rhetoric, which, instead of being the vehicle, are the mere substitute of meaning. We wish to take a part in politics, and then nothing is open to us but to follow some person, or some party, and to learn the commonplaces and the watchwords which belong to it. We hear about landed interests, and mercantile interests, and trade, and higher and lower classes, and their rights, duties, and prerogatives; and we attempt to transmit what we have received; and soon our minds become loaded and perplexed by the incumbrance of ideas which we have not mastered and cannot use. We have some vague idea, for instance, that constitutional government and slavery are inconsistent with each other; that there is a connection between private judgment and democracy, between Christianity and civilization; we attempt to find arguments in proof, and our arguments are the most plain demonstration that we simply do not understand the things themselves of which we are professedly treating.

Reflect, Gentlemen, how many disputes you must have listened to, which were interminable, because neither party understood either his opponent or himself. Consider the fortunes of an argument in a debating society, and the need there so frequently is, not simply of some clear thinker to disentangle the perplexities of thought, but of capacity in the

combatants to do justice to the clearest explanations which are set before them,—so much so, that the luminous arbitration only gives rise, perhaps, to more hopeless altercation. “Is a constitutional government better for a population than an absolute rule?” What a number of points have to be clearly apprehended before we are in a position to say one word on such a question! What is meant by “constitution”? by “constitutional government”? by “better”? by “a population”? and by “absolutism”? The ideas represented by these various words ought, I do not say, to be as perfectly defined and located in the minds of the speakers as objects of sight in a landscape, but to be sufficiently, even though incompletely, apprehended, before they have a right to speak. “How is it that democracy can admit of slavery, as in ancient Greece?” “How can Catholicism flourish in a republic?” Now, a person who knows his ignorance will say, “These questions are beyond me;” and he tries to gain a clear notion and a firm hold of them; and, if he speaks, it is as investigating, not as deciding. On the other hand, let him never have tried to throw things together, or to discriminate between them, or to denote their peculiarities, in that case he has no hesitation in undertaking any subject, and perhaps has most to say upon those questions which are most new to him. This is why so many men are one-sided, narrow-minded, prejudiced, crotchety. This is why able men have to change their minds and their line of action in middle age, and to begin life again, because they have followed their party, instead of having secured that faculty of true perception as regards intellectual objects which has accrued to them, without their knowing how, as regards the objects of sight.

But this defect will never be corrected,—on the contrary, it will be aggravated,—by those popular institutions to which I

referred just now. The displays of eloquence, or the interesting matter contained in their lectures, the variety of useful or entertaining knowledge contained in their libraries, though admirable in themselves, and advantageous to the student at a later stage of his course, never can serve as a substitute for methodical and laborious teaching. A young man of sharp and active intellect, who has had no other training, has little to show for it besides a litter of ideas heaped up into his mind anyhow. He can utter a number of truths or sophisms, as the case may be, and one is as good to him as another. He is up with a number of doctrines and a number of facts, but they are all loose and straggling, for he has no principles set up in his mind round which to aggregate and locate them. He can say a word or two on half a dozen sciences, but not a dozen words on any one. He says one thing now, and another thing presently; and when he attempts to write down distinctly what he holds upon a point in dispute, or what he understands by its terms, he breaks down, and is surprised at his failure. He sees objections more clearly than truths, and can ask a thousand questions which the wisest of men cannot answer; and withal, he has a very good opinion of himself, and is well satisfied with his attainments, and he declares against others, as opposed to the spread of knowledge altogether, who do not happen to adopt his ways of furthering it, or the opinions in which he considers it to result.

This is that barren mockery of knowledge which comes of attending on great Lecturers, or of mere acquaintance with reviews, magazines, newspapers, and other literature of the day, which, however able and valuable in itself, is not the instrument of intellectual education. If this is all the training a man has, the chance is that, when a few years have passed over his head, and he has talked to the full, he wearies of talking,

and of the subjects on which he talked. He gives up the pursuit of knowledge, and forgets what he knew, whatever it was; and, taking things at their best, his mind is in no very different condition from what it was when he first began to improve it, as he hoped, though perhaps he never thought of more than of amusing himself. I say, "at the best," for perhaps he will suffer from exhaustion and a distaste of the subjects which once pleased him; or perhaps he has suffered some real intellectual mischief; perhaps he has contracted some serious disorder, he has admitted some taint of scepticism, which he will never get rid of.

And here we see what is meant by the poet's maxim, "A little learning is a dangerous thing." Not that knowledge, little or much, if it be real knowledge, is dangerous; but that many a man considers a mere hazy view of many things to be real knowledge, whereas it does but mislead, just as a short-sighted man sees only so far as to be led by his uncertain sight over the precipice.

Such, then, being true cultivation of mind, and such the literary institutions which do not tend to it, I might proceed to show you, Gentlemen, did time admit, how, on the other hand, that kind of instruction of which our Evening Classes are a specimen, is especially suited to effect what they propose. Consider, for instance, what a discipline in accuracy of thought it is to have to construe a foreign language into your own; what a still severer and more improving exercise it is to translate from your own into a foreign language. Consider, again, what a lesson in memory and discrimination it is to get up, as it is called, any one chapter of history. Consider what a trial of acuteness, caution, and exactness, it is to master, and still more to prove, a number of definitions. Again, what an exercise in logic is classification, what an exercise in logical

precision it is to understand and enunciate the proof of any of the more difficult propositions of Euclid, or to master any one of the great arguments for Christianity so thoroughly as to bear examination upon it; or, again, to analyze sufficiently, yet in as few words as possible, a speech, or to draw up a critique upon a poem. And so of any other science,—chemistry, or comparative anatomy, or natural history; it does not matter what it is, if it be really studied and mastered, as far as it is taken up. The result is a formation of mind,—that is, a habit of order and system, a habit of referring every accession of knowledge to what we already know, and of adjusting the one with the other; and, moreover, as such a habit implies, the actual acceptance and use of certain principles as centres of thought, around which our knowledge grows and is located. Where this critical faculty exists, history is no longer a mere story-book, or biography a romance; orators and publications of the day are no longer infallible authorities; eloquent diction is no longer a substitute for matter, nor bold statements, or lively descriptions, a substitute for proof. This is that faculty of perception in intellectual matters, which, as I have said so often, is analogous to the capacity we all have of mastering the multitude of lines and colours which pour in upon our eyes, and of deciding what every one of them is worth.

—Cardinal Newman

JOHN STUART MILL: AN ANNIVERSARY

It was no bad usage of the old Romans to bring down from its niche the waxen image of an eminent ancestor on the anniversary of his natal day, and to recall his memory and its lineaments, even though time and all its wear and tear should have sprinkled a little dust or chipped a feature. Nor was the Alexandrian sage unwise who deemed himself unworthy of a birthday feast, and kept its very date strictly secret, yet sacrificed to the gods and entertained his friends on the birthdays of Socrates and Plato. Nobody would have been more severely displeased than Mill at an attempt to exalt him to a level in the empyrean with those two immortal shades; yet he was of the Socratic household. He was the first guide and inspirer of a generation that has now all but passed away; and it may perhaps be counted among the *sollemnia pietatis*, the feasts and offices of grateful recollection, in an Easter holiday from more clamorous things, to muse for a day upon the teacher who was born on the twentieth of May a hundred years ago.

Mill was once called by Mr. Gladstone the saint of rationalism, and the designation was a happy one. The canonisation of a saint in the Roman communion is preceded by the dozen or more preliminary steps of beatification; and the books tell us that the person to be beatified must be shown to have practised in a signal degree the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the four cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Courage, and Temperance. I think Mill would emerge in perfect safety from such an inquisition, on any rational or rationalistic interpretation of those high terms;

nor need we be at all afraid that the *advocatus diaboli* will find fatal flaws in any disposition that time's unkind hand may bring to light. His life was true to his professions, and was no less tolerant, liberal, unselfish, singleminded, high, and strenuous, than they were.

Nobody who claims to deal as a matter of history with the intellectual fermentation between 1840 and 1870 or a little longer, whatever value the historian may choose to set upon its products, can fail to assign a leading influence to Mill. One of the choicest spirits of our age, for example, was Henry Sidgwick, and he has told how he began his study of philosophy with the works of Mill, 'who, I think, had attained the full height (1860) of that remarkable influence which he exercised over youthful thought, and perhaps I may say the thought of the country generally, for a period of some years.' 'No one thinker, so far as I know, has ever had anything like equal influence in the forty years or so that have elapsed since Mill's dominion began to weaken.' To dilate on Mill's achievements, said Herbert Spencer, 'and to insist upon the wideness of his influence over the thought of his time, and consequently over the action of his time, seems to me superfluous.' Spencer was rightly chary of random compliments, yet he declared that he should value Mill's agreement more than that of any other thinker. It would be easy to collect copious testimony to this extraordinary supremacy. One may recall Taine's vivacious dialogue with some Oxford friend, actual or imaginary, in the sixties:—

What have you English got that is original?—Stuart Mill. —What is Stuart Mill?—A publicist: his little book on *Liberty* is as good as your Rousseau's *Social Contract* is bad, for Mill concludes as strongly for the independence of the individual as Rousseau for the despotism of the State.—That is not enough to make a philosopher. What else?—An economist, who

goes beyond his science, and subordinates production to man, instead of subordinating man to production.—Still not enough to make a philosopher. What more?—A logician.—Of what school?—His own. I told you he was an original.—Then who are his friends?—Locke and Comte in the front; then Hume and Newton.—Is he systematic?—a speculative reformer?—Oh, he has far too much mind for that. He does not pose in the majesty of a restorer of science; he does not proclaim, like your Germans, that his book is going to open a new era for the human race. He walks step by step, a little slowly, and often close to the ground, across a host of instance and example. He excels in giving precision to an idea, in disentangling a principle, in recovering it from under a crowd of different cases, in refuting, in distinguishing, in arguing.—Has he arrived at any great conception of a Whole?—Yes.—Has he a personal and complete idea of nature and the human mind?—Yes.

Though the reader, if he be so minded, may smile at this to-day, still it is a true summary of the claim then made for Mill, of the position generally assented to (by Taine himself among others), and of aims partially if not wholly achieved. Bentham founded a great school, James Mill inspired a political group, Dugald Stewart impressed a talented band with love of virtue and of truth. John Mill possessed for a time a more general ascendancy than any of these. Just as Macaulay's Essays fixed literary and historical subjects for the average reader, so the writings of Mill set the problems and defined the channels for people with a taste for political thinking and thinking deeper than political. He opened all the ground, touched all the issues, posed all the questions in the spheres where the abstract intellects of men must be most active. It is true, Mill's fame and influence are no longer what they were. How should they be? As if perpetuity of direct power or of personal renown could fall to any philosopher's lot, outside the little group consecrated by tradition. Books outside of the enchanted realm of art and imagination become spent forces; men who were the driving agents of their day sink into literary

names, and take a faded place in the catalogue of exhausted influences.

The philosophic teacher's fame, like the statesman's or the soldier's—like the great navigator's, inventor's, or discoverer's—*è color d'erba*, is like the grass, whose varying hue

Doth come and go—by that same sun destroyed
From whose warm ray its vigour first it drew.

New needs emerge. Proportions change. Fresh strata are uncovered. Theories once charged with potency evaporate. So a later generation must play umpire. How should Mill be better off than Grotius or Montesquieu, Descartes or Locke, or Jean Jacques, or any of the others who in their day shook the globe, or lighted up some single stage of the world's dim journey? As is well put for our present case, a work great in itself and of exclusive authorship is not the only way in which original power manifests itself. 'A multitude of small impressions,' says Bain, the most sinewy of Mill's allies, 'may have the accumulated effect of a mighty whole. Who shall sum up Mill's collective influence as an instructor in politics, ethics, logic, and metaphysics? No calculus can integrate the innumerable little pulses of knowledge and of thought, that he has made to vibrate in the minds of his generation.'

The amazing story of his education is well known from his own account of it. In after years he told Miss Caroline Fox, whose 'Journals' are the most attractive of all the surviving memorials of Mill, 'that his father made him study ecclesiastical history before he was ten. This method of early intense application he would not recommend to others; in most cases it would not answer, and where it does, the buoyancy of youth is entirely superseded by the maturity of manhood, and action is very likely to be merged in reflection. "I never was a boy," he said, "never played at cricket; it is better to let Nature

have her own way." ' He has told us what were his father's moral inculcations—justice, temperance (to which he gave a very extended application), veracity, perseverance, readiness to encounter pain and especially labour; regard for the public good; estimation of persons according to their merits, and of things according to their intrinsic usefulness; a life of exertion in contradiction to one of self-indulgent ease and sloth. But James Mill, when all was said, ' thought human life a poor thing at best, after the freshness of youth and of satisfied curiosity had gone by.' He would sometimes say that if life were made what it might be by good government and good education, it would be worth having, but he never spoke with anything like enthusiasm even of that possibility. Passionate emotions he regarded as a form of madness, and the intense was a byword of scornful disapprobation. In spite of training, his son grew to be very different. John Mill's opinions on subjects where emotion was possible or appropriate were suffused by feeling; and admiration, anger, contempt often found expression intense enough. Nor did a hint ever escape him about life being ' a poor thing at best.' All pointed the other way. ' Happiness,' he once wrote, ' is not a life of rapture; but moments of such in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation of the whole not to expect from life more than it is capable of bestowing.' Even friendly philosophers have denounced this as a rash and off-hand formula, and they may be right; for anything that I know, analysis might kill it. Meanwhile it touches at least three vital points in a reasonable standard for a life well laid out. Mill had his moments of discouragement, but they never lasted long and never arrested effort.

He realised how great an expenditure of the reformer's head and heart, to use his own phrase, went in vain attempts to make the political dry bones live. With cheerful stoicism he accepted this law of human things. 'When the end comes,' he wrote to a friend in pensive vein, 'the whole of life will appear but as a day, and the only question of any moment to us then will be, Has that day been wasted? Wasted it has not been by those who have been, for however short a time, a source of happiness and of moral good even to the narrowest circle. But there is only one plain rule of life eternally binding, and independent of all variation of creeds, embracing equally the greatest moralities and the smallest; it is this. Try thyself unweariedly till thou findest the highest thing thou art capable of doing, faculties and circumstances being both duly considered, and then do it.' This responsibility for life and gifts was once put by Mr. Gladstone as a threefold disposition:—to resist the tyranny of self; to recognise the rule of duty; to maintain the supremacy of the higher over the lower parts of our nature. Mill had none of Mr. Gladstone's faith in an overruling Providence; but in a famous passage he set out his conviction that social feeling in men themselves might do as well:—

'This firm foundation is that of the social feelings of mankind; the desire to be in unity with our fellow creatures, which is already a powerful principle in human nature, and happily one of those which tend to become stronger, even without express inculcation, from the influences of civilization. Men are under a necessity of conceiving themselves as at least abstaining from all the grosser injuries, and (if only for their own protection) living in a state of constant protest against them. They are also familiar with the fact of co-operating with others, and proposing to themselves a collective, not an individual, interest, as the aim (at least for the time being) of their actions . . . Not only does all strengthening of social ties, and all healthy growth of society, give to each individual a stronger personal interest in practically consulting the welfare of others; it also leads him to identify his feelings more and more with their good, or at least with an ever greater

degree of practical consideration for it. He comes, as though instinctively, to be conscious of himself as a being who of course pays regard to others. The good of others becomes to him a thing naturally and necessarily to be attended to, like any of the physical conditions of our existence . . . In an improving state of mind, the influences are constantly on the increase which tend to generate in each individual a feeling of unity with all the rest; which feeling, if perfect, would make him never think of, or desire, any beneficial condition for himself, in the benefits of which they are not included.'

The failure of what he regarded as an expiring theology, made this exaltation of social feeling a necessity. One profound master sentiment with Mill was passionate hatred for abuse of power either coarse or subtle. Hatred of oppression in all its forms burned deep in his inmost being. It inspired those fierce pages against the maleficence of Nature (in the *Three Essays on Religion*), his almost vindictive indictment of Nature's immorality—immoral because 'the course of natural phenomena is replete with everything that when committed by human beings is most worthy of abhorrence; so that any one who endeavoured in his actions to imitate the natural course of things, would be universally seen and acknowledged to be the wickedest of men.' This poignant piece is perhaps the only chapter to be found in his writings where he throws aside his ordinary measure and reserve, and allows himself the stern relief of vehement and exalted declamation. The same wrath that blazes in him when he is asked to use glozing words about the moral atrocities of Nature to man, breaks out unabated when he recounts the tyrannical brutalities of man to woman. Nor even did the flame of his indignation burn low, when he thought of the callous recklessness of men and women to helpless animals—our humble friends and ministers whose power of loyalty, attachment, patience, fidelity, so often seems to deserve as good a word as human or a better.

The great genius of Pity in that age was Victor Hugo, and a superb genius it was. But in Mill, pity and wrath at the wrong and the stupidities of the world nerved him to steadfast work and thought in definite channels. His postulate of a decided predominance of the active over the passive, meant devotion of thought to practical ends. His life was not stimulated by mere intellectual curiosity, but by the resolute purpose of furthering human improvement. Nor had he the delight that prompts some strong men in dialectic for its own sake; he would have cared as little for this vain eristic, as he cared for the insipid pleasures and spurious business that go to make up the lower species of men of the world. His daily work at the old East India House; vigorous and profitable disputation with a chosen circle of helpful friends; much travelling; lending a hand in reviews or wherever else he saw a way of spreading the light—such were the outer events. In all he was bent on making the most of life as a sacred instrument for good purposes. The production of two such works as the *Logic* (1843) and the *Political Economy* (1848) was drain enough on vital energy. They were the most sustained of his efforts. But he never desisted or stood still. His correspondence with Comte, to whom he owed and avowed so large a debt, is the most vivid illustration of the vigour and tenacity with which he threw himself day after day and year after year into the formation and propagation of what he took for right opinions.

He sat in the House of Commons for Westminster during a short and a bad Parliament (1865-68), where old parties were at sea, new questions were insincerely handled, and the authority of leaders was dubious and disputable. The oratory happened to be brilliant, but Mill was never of those who make the ideal of government to be that which consists 'in the finest speeches made before the steadiest and largest majority.' Fawcett, the

most devoted of all his personal and political adherents, and at that time himself a member, used to insist that Mill's presence in the House was of value as raising the moral tone of that powerful but peculiar assembly. At the same time he could not but deplore the excessive sensitiveness to duty and conscience that made Mill nail himself to his seat from the opening of every sitting to its end. Mill would perhaps have had a better chance of real influence in our more democratic House to-day, than in that hour of unprincipled faction and bewildered strategy. As it was, members felt that his presence was in some way an honour to them, and they listened with creditable respect to speeches that were acute, well argued, apt for the occasion, and not too long nor too many. But, after all, Mill was not of them, and he was not at home with them. Disraeli is said to have called him 'a political finishing governess.' Bright, when privately reproached for dissenting on the ballot or something else from so great a thinker, replied in his gruffest tone that the worst of great thinkers is that they generally think wrong. The sally would have been ungrateful if it had been serious, for on all the grand decisive issues—American Slavery, Free Trade, Reform—Mill and Bright fought side by side. He was sometimes spoken of for the India Office when the time should come, and he undoubtedly knew more of India than all Secretaries of State ever installed there put together. But he had refused a seat on the Indian Council when it was first formed, for the reason that he doubted the working of the new system; and as it happened, he lost his seat in Parliament before the Liberals returned to power (when, by the way, India was proposed to Bright). So we cannot test Mill by the old Greek saw that office shows the man. His true ambition, and a lofty one it must be counted, was to affect the course of events in his time by affecting the course of thought.

It is a curious irony that the author of the inspiring passage on Social Feeling above quoted should be a target for slings and arrows from Socialist sects, as the cold apostle of hardened individualism. As if the obnoxious creed in this, its narrow sense, were in those days possible to any reflective mind of Mill's calibre. The terrific military surge that swept and roared over Europe for quarter of a century after the fall of the French Monarchy in 1789, no sooner drew back from the shore than there emerged what we summarily style the Social Question. Catholic writers of marked grasp and vision entered upon the field of social reconstruction with Conservative sword and trowel in their hands, to be followed in due time by champions from within the same fold, and aiming at the same reconciliation, but armed with the antagonistic principles of Liberalism. In England Bentham and his school applied themselves to social reform, mainly in the sphere of law, with the aid of democratic politics. All that was best and soundest in Benthamism was absorbed by Mill. He widened its base, deepened the philosophic foundations, and in his *Logic* devised an approach to reform from a novel direction, far away from platforms, cabinets, bills, and electioneering posters. 'The notion,' he says in his *Autobiography*, 'that truths external to the mind may be known by intuition or consciousness, independently of observation or experience, is, I am persuaded, in these times, the great intellectual support of false doctrines and bad institutions. By the aid of this theory every inveterate belief and every intense feeling, of which the origin is not remembered, is enabled to dispense with the obligation of justifying itself by reason, and is erected into its own all-sufficient voucher and justification. There never was such an instrument devised for consecrating all deep-seated prejudices.' The *Logic* was an elaborate attempt to perform the practical task of dislodging intuitive philosophy,

as a step towards sounder thinking about society and institutions; as a step, in other words, towards Liberalism.

In 1861 Taine wrote a chapter on the book, and Mill said no more exact or complete idea of its contents as a body of philosophic doctrine could be found. But he demurred to Taine's description of its psychology as peculiarly English, and Mill's words give an interesting glimpse of his own view of his place in the filiation of philosophy. The psychology was peculiarly English, he says, in the first half of the eighteenth century, beginning with Locke down to the reaction against Hume. This reaction, beginning in Scotland, long dressed itself in German form, and ended by invading the whole field. 'When I wrote my book, I stood nearly alone in my opinion; and though my way of looking at matters found a degree of sympathy that I did not expect, there were still to be found in England twenty *a priori* and spiritualist philosophers for one partisan of the doctrine of experience. Throughout the whole of our reaction of seventy years, the philosophy of experience has been regarded as French, just as you qualify it as English. Each view is a mistake. The two systems follow each other by law of reaction all over the world. Only the different countries never exactly coincide either in revolution or counter-revolution.'

There is no room here to state, discuss, estimate, or classify Mill's place in the stream of philosophic history. The volume of criticism to which he exposed such extensive surface was immense, and soon after his death the hostile tide began pretty rapidly to rise. T. H. Green, at the height of his influence in Oxford, assailed Mill's main positions both in logic and metaphysic. Dr. Caird urged fresh objections. They multiplied. It was inevitable that they should. Those later writings of his which brought Mill's vogue to a climax, appeared at the very moment when there broke upon the scene those overwhelming

floods of evolutionary speculation, which seemed destined to shift or sweep away the beacons that had lighted his philosophic course. *Liberty*, for instance, was published in 1859, the very year of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. As one of the most ardent disciples of the school has put the matter in slightly excited form—when the new progressive theories burst upon the world, Comte was left stranded, Hegel was relegated with a bow to a few Oxford tutors, Buckle was exploded like an inflated windbag, and 'even Mill himself—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—was felt to be lacking in full appreciation of the dynamic and kinetic element in universal nature.' Mill has not been left without defenders. One of them (Mr. Hobhouse in his *Theory of Knowledge*) holds that the head and front of his offending was that, unlike other philosophers, he wrote intelligibly enough for inconsistencies to be found out. Mr. Haldane, who regards the *Examination of Hamilton* as the greatest of Mill's writings, vindicates a place for him as going far down in the deepest regions of ontology, as coming near to the old conclusions of the Germans long ago, 'conclusions to which many writers and thinkers of our time are now tending.' The third book of the *Logic* (on Induction) is counted by competent judges to be the best work he ever did. So far, the most elaborate exposition, criticism, and amplification of Mill's work and thought has come from the brave and true-hearted Leslie Stephen, in one of his three volumes on the Utilitarians.

Whether Mill tried to pass 'by a highway in the air' from psychological hedonism to utilitarianism; whether his explanation of the sentence, 'The Marshal Niel is a yellow rose,' be right or wrong; whether the basis on which he founds induction be strong or weak; whether his denial of the accuracy of geometry has or has not a real foundation; whether his doctrine of 'inseparable association' exposes the radical defect

in the laws of association—these, and the hundred other questions over which expert criticism has ranged ever since his time, are not for us to-day. Even those who do not place him highest, agree that at least he raised the true points, put the sharpest questions, and swept away the most tiresome cobwebs. If the metaphysical controversy has not always been good-natured, perhaps it is because *on ne se passionne que pour ce qui est obscur*.

In point of literary style—a thing on which many coxcombries have sprung up since Mill's day—although both his topics and his temperament denied him a place among the greatest masters, yet his writing had for the younger men of his generation a grave power well fitted for the noble task of making men love truth and search for it. There is no ambition in his style. He never forced his phrase. Even when anger moves him, the ground does not tremble, as when Bossuet or Burke exhorts, denounces, wrestles, menaces, and thunders. He has none of the incomparably winning graces by which Newman made mere siren style do duty for exact, penetrating, and coherent thought; by which, moreover, he actually raised his Church to what would not so long before have seemed a strange and incredible rank in the mind of Protestant England. Style has worked many a miracle before now, but none more wonderful than Newman's. Mill's journey from Bentham, Malthus, Ricardo, to Coleridge, Wordsworth, Comte, and then on at last to some of those Manichean speculations that so perplexed or scandalised his disciples, was almost as striking, though not so picturesquely described, as Newman's journey from Evangelicalism to Rome. These graces were none of Mill's gifts, nor could he have coveted them. He did not impose: he drew, he led, he quickened with a living force and fire the commonplace that truth is a really serious and rather difficult

affair, worth persistently pursuing in every path where duty beckons. He made people feel, with a kind of eagerness evidently springing from internal inspiration, that the true dignity of man is mind.

We English have never adopted the French word *justesse*, as distinct from justice; possibly we have been apt to fall short in the quality that *justesse* denotes. 'Without *justesse* of mind,' said Voltaire, 'there is nothing.' If we were bound to the extremely unreasonable task of finding a single word for a mind so wide as Mill's in the range of its interests, so diversified in methods of intellectual approach, so hospitable to new intellectual and moral impressions, we might do worse than single out *justesse* as the key to his method, the key to what is best in his influence, the mastermark and distinction of his way of offering his thoughts to the world. Measure and reserve in mere language was not the secret, though neither teacher nor disciple can be the worse for measuring language. In a country where, as has often been said, politics and religion are the two absorbing fields of discussion, and where politics is the field in which men and newspapers are most incessantly vocal and vociferous, *justesse* naturally seems but a tame and shambling virtue. For if we were always candid, always on the watch against over-statement, always anxious to be even fairer to our adversary's case than to our own, what would become of politics? Why, there would be no politics. In that sphere we must, as it might seem, accept the dictum of Dr. Johnson, that 'to treat your opponent with respect is to give him an advantage to which he is not entitled.'

If it be true that very often more depends upon the temper and spirit in which men hold their opinions than upon the opinions themselves, Mill was indeed our benefactor. From beginning to end of his career he was forced into the polemical

attitude over the whole field; into an incessant and manful wrestle for what he thought true and right against what he regarded as false or wrong. One of his merits was the way in which he fought these battles—the pains he took to find out the strength of an opposing argument; the modesty that made him treat the opponent as an equal; an entire freedom from pedagogue's arrogance. In one or two of his earlier pieces he knows how to give a trouncing; to Brougham, for instance, for his views on the French Revolution of 1848. His private judgments on philosophic or other performances were often severe. Dean Mansel preached a once celebrated set of Bampton lectures against him, and undergraduates flocked to Saint Mary's to hear them, with as much zest as they would to-day manifest about fiscal reform or the Education Bill. Mill privately spoke of Mansel's book as 'loathsome,' but his disdain was usually mute. A philosopher once thought that a review of his theory of vision was arrogant and overbearing. Mill replied in words that are a good example of his canons for a critic:—

'We are not aware of any other arrogance than is implied by thinking ourselves right and by consequence Mr. Bailey wrong. We certainly did not feel ourselves required, by consideration for him, to state our difference of opinion with pretended hesitation. We should not have written on the subject unless we had been able to form a decided opinion on it, and having done so, to have expressed that opinion otherwise than decidedly would have been cowardice, not modesty; it would have been sacrificing our conviction of truth to fear of offence. To dispute the soundness of a man's doctrines and the conclusiveness of his arguments may always be interpreted as an assumption of superiority over him; true courtesy, however, between thinkers is not shown by refraining from this sort of assumption, but by tolerating it in one another.'

It was this candid, patient, and self-controlled temper that provoked the truly remarkable result—a man immersed in unsparing controversy for most of his life (controversy, too, on

all the subjects where difference of opinion is aptest to kindle anger, contempt, and even the horrid and irrelevant imputation of personal sin), and yet somehow held in general honour as a sort of oracle, instead of having presented to him the fatal cup of hemlock that has so often been the reformer's portion. He really succeeded in procuring a sort of popular halo round the dismal and derided name of philosopher, and his books on political theory and sociological laws went into cheap popular editions. Like Locke and Hobbes, he propounded general ideas for particular occasions, and built dykes and ramparts on rational principles for movements that had their source not so much in reasoning in 'the world and waves of men,' as in passions and interests, sectarian or material, and in the confused and turbid rush of intractable events.

Among all the changes of social ordinance in Mill's day and generation, none is more remarkable, and it may by and by be found that none cuts deeper, than the successive stages of the emancipation of women. And to this no thinker or writer of his time contributed so powerfully as Mill. Much of the ground has now been won, but the mark made by his little tract on the *Subjection of Women* upon people of better minds among us was profound, and a book touching so impressively the most penetrating of all our human relations with one another is slow to go quite out of date.

In political economy (1848) he is admitted, by critics not at all disposed to put his pretensions too high, to have exercised without doubt a greater influence than any other writer since Ricardo, and as an exposition of the principles on which the emancipating work between 1820 and 1860 was done, his book still holds its ground. Without being tempted into the controversies of the fugitive hour, it is enough to mark that Mill is not of those economists who treat their propositions as absolute

and dogmatic, rather than relative and conditional, depending on social time and place. One of the objects that he always had most at heart, in his capacity as publicist, was to set democracy on its guard against itself. No object could be either more laudable or more needed. He was less successful in dealing with Parliamentary machinery than in the infinitely more important task of moulding and elevating popular character, motives, ideals, and steady respect for truth, equity, and common sense—things that matter a vast deal more than machinery. Save the individual; cherish his freedom; respect his growth and leave room for it—this was ever the refrain. His book on Representative Government set up the case against Carlyle's glorification of men like Napoleon or Frederick. Within twenty years from Mill's death the tide had turned Carlyle's way, and now to-day it has turned back again. Then in the ten years before his death Neo-machiavellianism rose to ascendancy on the Continent of Europe, and a quarter of a century later we have had a short spell of Neo-machiavellianism in England—end justifying means, country right or wrong, and all the rest of it. Here again the tide has now turned, and Millite sanity is for a new season restored. In the sovereign field of tolerance his victory has been complete. Only those who can recall the social odium that surrounded heretical opinions before Mill began to achieve popularity, are able rightly to appreciate the battle in which he was in so many aspects the protagonist.

In the later years, when he had travelled over the smooth places of a man's life and the rough places, his younger friends never heard a word fall from him that did not encourage and direct; and nobody that ever lived enjoyed more of that highest of pleasures, the pointing the right path for new wayfarers, urging them to walk in it. 'Montesquieu must die,' exclaimed

old Bentham, in a rare mood of rhapsody; 'he must die as his great countryman, Descartes, had died before him; he must wither as the blade withers when the corn is ripe; he must die, but let tears of gratitude and admiration bedew his grave.' So the pilgrim may feel to-day, as he stands by that mournful grave at windy Avignon, city of sombre history and forlorn memories, where Mill's remains were laid a generation ago this month (May, 1873). Measure the permanence of his contribution to thought or social action as we will, he will long deserve to be commemorated as the personification of some of the noblest and most fruitful qualities within the reach and compass of mankind.

—*Viscount Morley*

THE GENIUS OF JAPANESE CIVILIZATION

I

Without losing a single ship or a single battle, Japan has broken down the power of China, made a new Korea, enlarged her own territory, and changed the whole political face of the East. Astonishing as this has seemed politically, it is much more astonishing psychologically; for it represents the result of a vast play of capacities with which the race had never been credited abroad,—capacities of a very high order. The psychologist knows that the so-called “adoption of Western civilization” within a time of thirty years cannot mean the addition to the Japanese brain of any organs or powers previously absent from it. He knows that it cannot mean any sudden change in the mental or moral character of the race. Such changes are not made in a generation. Transmitted civilization works much more slowly, requiring even hundreds of years to produce certain permanent psychological results.

It is in this light that Japan appears the most extraordinary country in the world; and the most wonderful thing in the whole episode of her “Occidentalization” is that the race brain could bear so heavy a shock. Nevertheless, though the fact be unique in human history, what does it really mean? Nothing more than rearrangement of a part of the pre-existing machinery of thought. Even that, for thousands of brave young minds, was death. The adoption of Western civilization was not nearly such an easy matter as unthinking persons imagined. And it is quite evident that the mental readjustments, effected at a cost which remains to be told, have given good results only

along directions in which the race had always shown capacities of special kinds. Thus, the appliances of Western industrial invention have worked admirably in Japanese hands,—have produced excellent results in those crafts at which the nation had been skilful, in other and quainter ways, for ages. There has been no transformation,—nothing more than the turning of old abilities into new and larger channels. The scientific professions tell the same story. For certain forms of science, such as medicine, surgery (there are no better surgeons in the world than the Japanese), chemistry, microscopy, the Japanese genius is naturally adapted; and in all these it has done work already heard of round the world. In war and statecraft it has shown wonderful power; but throughout their history the Japanese have been characterized by great military and political capacity. Nothing remarkable has been done, however, in directions foreign to the national genius. In the study, for example, of Western music, Western art, Western literature, time would seem to have been simply wasted.* These things make appeal extraordinary to emotional life with us; they make no such appeal to Japanese emotional life. Every serious thinker knows that emotional transformation of the individual through education is impossible. To imagine that the emotional character of an Oriental race could be transformed in the short space of thirty years, by the contact of Occidental ideas, is absurd. Emotional life, which is older

* In one limited sense, Western art has influenced Japanese literature and drama; but the character of the influence proves the racial differences to which I refer. European plays have been reshaped for the Japanese stage, and European novels rewritten for Japanese readers. But a literal version is rarely attempted; for the original incidents, thoughts, and emotions would be unintelligible to the average reader or play-goer. Plots are adopted: sentiments and incidents are totally transformed.

than intellectual life, and deeper, can no more be altered suddenly by a change of *milieu* than the surface of a mirror can be changed by passing reflections. All that Japan has been able to do so miraculously well has been done without any self-transformation; and those, who imagine her emotionally closer to us to-day than she may have been thirty years ago, ignore facts of science which admit of no argument.

Sympathy is limited by comprehension. We may sympathize to the same degree that we understand. One may imagine that he sympathizes with a Japanese or a Chinese; but the sympathy can never be real to more than a small extent outside of the simplest phases of common emotional life,—those phases in which child and man are at one. The more complex feelings of the Oriental have been composed by combinations of experiences, ancestral and individual, which have had no really precise correspondence in Western life, and which we can therefore not fully know. For converse reasons, the Japanese cannot, even though they would, give Europeans their best sympathy.

But while it remains impossible for the man of the West to discern the true colour of Japanese life, either intellectual or emotional (since the one is woven into the other), it is equally impossible for him to escape the conviction that, compared with his own, it is very small. It is dainty; it holds delicate potentialities of rarest interest and value; but it is otherwise so small that Western life, by contrast with it, seems almost supernatural. For we must judge visible and measurable manifestations. So judging, what a contrast between the emotional and intellectual worlds of West and East! Far less striking that between the frail wooden streets of the Japanese capital and the tremendous solidity of a thoroughfare in Paris or London. When one compares the utterances which West and East have given to

their dreams, their aspirations, their sensations,—a Gothic cathedral with a Shinto temple, an opera by Verdi or a trilogy by Wagner with a performance of *geisha*, a European epic with a Japanese poem,—how incalculable the difference in emotional volume, in imaginative power, in artistic synthesis! True, our music is an essentially modern art; but in looking back through all our past the difference in creative force is scarcely less marked,—not surely in the period of Roman magnificence, of marble amphitheatres and of aqueducts spanning provinces, nor in the Greek period of the divine in sculpture and of the supreme in literature.

And this leads to the subject of another wonderful fact in the sudden development of Japanese power. Where are the outward material signs of that immense new force she has been showing both in productivity and in war? Nowhere! That which we miss in her emotional and intellectual life is missing also from her industrial and commercial life,—largeness! The land remains what it was before; its face has scarcely been modified by all the changes of Meiji. The miniature railways and telegraph poles, the bridges and tunnels, might almost escape notice in the ancient green of the landscapes. In all the cities, with the exception of the open ports and their little foreign settlements, there exists hardly a street vista suggesting the teaching of Western ideas. You might journey two hundred miles through the interior of the country, looking in vain for large manifestations of the new civilization. In no place do you find commerce exhibiting its ambition in gigantic warehouses, or industry expanding its machinery under acres of roofing. A Japanese city is still, as it was ten centuries ago, little more than a wilderness of wooden sheds,—picturesque, indeed, as paper lanterns are, but scarcely less frail. And there is no great stir and noise anywhere,—no heavy traffic, no booming

and rumbling, no furious haste. In Tokyo itself you may enjoy, if you wish, the peace of a country village. This want of visible or audible signs of the new-found force which is now menacing the markets of the West and changing the maps of the Far East gives one a queer, I might even say a weird feeling. It is almost the sensation received when, after climbing through miles of silence to reach some Shinto shrine, you find voidness only and solitude,—an elfish, empty little wooden structure, mouldering in shadows a thousand years old. The strength of Japan, like the strength of her ancient faith, needs little material display: both exist where the deepest real power of any great people exists,—in the Race Ghost.

II

As I muse, the remembrance of a great city comes back to me,—a city walled up to the sky and roaring like the sea. The memory of that roar returns first; then the vision defines: a chasm, which is a street, between mountains, which are houses. I am tired, because I have walked many miles between those precipices of masonry, and have trodden no earth,—only slabs of rock,—and have heard nothing but thunder of tumult. Deep below those huge pavements I know there is a cavernous world tremendous: systems underlying systems of ways contrived for water and steam and fire. On either hand tower façades pierced by scores of tiers of windows,—cliffs of architecture shutting out the sun. Above, the pale blue streak of sky is cut by a maze of spidery lines,—an infinite cobweb of electric wires. In that block on the right there dwell nine thousand souls; the tenants of the edifice facing it pay the annual rent of a million dollars. Seven millions scarcely covered the cost of those bulks overshadowing the square beyond,—and there are

miles of such. Stairways of steel and cement, of brass and stone, with costliest balustrades, ascend through the decades and double decades of stories; but no foot treads them. By waterpower, by steam, by electricity, men go up and down; the heights are too dizzy, the distances too great, for the use of the limbs. My friend, who pays rent of five thousand dollars for his rooms in the fourteenth story of a monstrosity not far off, has never trodden his stairway. I am walking for curiosity alone; with a serious purpose I should not walk: the spaces are too broad, the time is too precious, for such slow exertion,—men travel from district to district, from house to office, by steam. Heights are too great for the voice to traverse; orders are given and obeyed by machinery. By electricity far-away doors are opened; with one touch a hundred rooms are lighted or heated.

And all this enormity is hard, grim, dumb; it is the enormity of mathematical power applied to utilitarian ends of solidity and durability. These leagues of palaces, of warehouses, of business structures, of buildings describable and indescribable, are not beautiful, but sinister. One feels depressed by the mere sensation of the enormous life which created them, life without sympathy; of their prodigious manifestation of power, power without pity. They are the architectural utterance of the new industrial age. And there is no halt in the thunder of wheels, in the storming of hoofs and of human feet. To ask a question, one must shout into the ear of the questioned; to see, to understand, to move in that high-pressure medium, needs experience. The unaccustomed feels the sensation of being in a panic, in a tempest, in a cyclone. Yet all this is order.

The monster streets leap rivers, span seaways, with bridges of stone, bridges of steel. Far as the eye can reach, a bewilderment of masts, a web-work of rigging, conceals the



shores, which are cliffs of masonry. Trees in a forest stand less thickly, branches in a forest mingle less closely, than the masts and spars of that immeasurable maze. Yet all is order.

III

Generally speaking, we construct for endurance, the Japanese for impermanency. Few things for common use are made in Japan with a view to durability. The straw sandals worn out and replaced at each stage of a journey; the robe consisting of a few simple widths loosely stitched together for wearing, and unstitched again for washing; the fresh chopsticks served to each new guest at a hotel; the light *shoji* frames serving at once for windows and walls, and repapered twice a year; the mattings renewed every autumn,—all these are but random examples of countless small things in daily life that illustrate the national contentment with impermanency.

What is the story of a common Japanese dwelling? Leaving my home in the morning, I observe, as I pass the corner of the next street crossing mine, some men setting up bamboo poles on a vacant lot there. Returning after five hours' absence, I find on the same lot the skeleton of a two-story house. Next forenoon I see that the walls are nearly finished already,—mud and wattles. By sun-down the roof has been completely tiled. On the following morning I observe that the mattings have been put down, and the inside plastering has been finished. In five days the house is completed. This, of course, is a cheap building; a fine one would take much longer to put up and finish. But Japanese cities are for the most part composed of such common buildings. They are as cheap as they are simple.

I cannot now remember where I first met with the observation that the curve of the Chinese roof might preserve the memory of the nomad tent. The idea haunted me long after I had ungratefully forgotten the book in which I found it; and when I first saw, in Izumo, the singular structure of the old Shinto temples, with queer cross-projections at their gable-ends and upon their roof-ridges, the suggestion of the forgotten essayist about the possible origin of much less ancient forms returned to me with great force. But there is much in Japan besides primitive architectural traditions to indicate a nomadic ancestry for the race. Always and everywhere there is a total absence of what we would call solidity; and the characteristics of impermanence seem to mark almost everything in the exterior life of the people, except, indeed, the immemorial costume of the peasant and the shape of the implements of his toil. Not to dwell upon the fact that even during the comparatively brief period of her written history Japan has had more than sixty capitals, of which the greater number have completely disappeared, it may be broadly stated that every Japanese city is rebuilt within the time of a generation. Some temples and a few colossal fortresses offer exceptions; but, as a general rule, the Japanese city changes its substance, if not its form, in the lifetime of a man. Fires, earthquakes, and many other causes partly account for this; the chief reason, however, is that houses are not built to last. The common people have no ancestral homes. The dearest spot to all is, not the place of birth, but the place of burial; and there is little that is permanent save the resting-places of the dead and the sites of the ancient shrines.

The land itself is a land of impermanence. Rivers shift their courses, coasts their outline, plains their level; volcanic peaks heighten or crumble; valleys are blocked by lava-

floods or landslides; lakes appear and disappear. Even the matchless shape of Fuji, that snowy miracle which has been the inspiration of artists for centuries, is said to have been slightly changed since my advent to the country; and not a few other mountains have in the same short time taken totally new forms. Only the general lines of the land, the general aspects of its nature, the general character of the seasons, remain fixed. Even the very beauty of the landscapes is largely illusive,—a beauty of shifting colours and moving mists. Only he to whom those landscapes are familiar can know how their mountain vapours make mockery of real changes which have been, and ghostly predictions of other changes yet to be, in the history of the archipelago.

The gods, indeed, remain,—haunt their homes upon the hills, diffuse a soft religious awe through the twilight of their groves, perhaps because they are without form and substance. Their shrines seldom pass utterly into oblivion, like the dwellings of men. But every Shinto temple is necessarily rebuilt at more or less brief intervals; and the holiest,—the shrine of Isé,—in obedience to immemorial custom, must be demolished every twenty years, and its timbers cut into thousands of tiny charms, which are distributed to pilgrims.

From Aryan India, through China, came Buddhism, with its vast doctrine of impermanency. The builders of the first Buddhist temples in Japan—architects of another race—built well: witness the Chinese structures at Kamakura that have survived so many centuries, while of the great city which once surrounded them not a trace remains. But the psychical influence of Buddhism could in no land impel minds to the love of material stability. The teaching that the universe is an illusion; that life is but one momentary halt upon an infinite journey; that all attachment to persons, to places, or to

things must be fraught with sorrow; that only through suppression of every desire—even the desire of Nirvana itself—can humanity reach the eternal peace, certainly harmonized with the older racial feeling. Though the people never much occupied themselves with the profounder philosophy of the foreign faith, its doctrine of impermanency must, in course of time, have profoundly influenced national character. It explained and consoled; it imparted new capacity to bear all things bravely; it strengthened that patience which is a trait of the race. Even in Japanese art—developed, if not actually created, under Buddhist influence—the doctrine of impermanency has left its traces. Buddhism taught that nature was a dream, an illusion, a phantasmagoria; but it also taught men how to seize the fleeting impressions of that dream, and how to interpret them in relation to the highest truth. And they learned well. In the flushed splendour of the blossom-bursts of spring, in the coming and the going of the cicadæ, in the dying crimson of autumn foliage, in the ghostly beauty of snow, in the delusive motion of wave or cloud, they saw old parables of perpetual meaning. Even their calamities—fire, flood, earthquake, pestilence—interpreted to them unceasingly the doctrine of the eternal Vanishing.

All things which exist in Time must perish. The forests, the mountains,—all things thus exist. In Time are born all things having desire.

The Sun and Moon, Sakra himself, with all the multitude of his attendants, will all, without exception, perish; there is not one that will endure.

In the beginning things were fixed; in the end again they separate: different combinations cause other substance; for in nature there is no uniform and constant principle.



All component things must grow old; impermanent are all component things. Even unto a grain of sesamum seed there is no such thing as a compound which is permanent. All are transient; all have the inherent quality of dissolution.

All component things, without exception, are impermanent, unstable, despicable, sure to depart, disintegrating; all are temporary as a mirage, as a phantom, or as foam.....Even as all earthen vessels made by the potter end in being broken, so end the lives of men.

And a belief in matter itself is unmentionable and inexpressible,—it is neither a thing nor no-thing: and this is known even by children and ignorant persons.

IV

Now it is worth while to inquire if there be not some compensatory value attaching to this impermanency and this smallness in the national life.

Nothing is more characteristic of that life than its extreme fluidity. The Japanese population represents a medium whose particles are in perpetual circulation. The motion is in itself peculiar. It is larger and more eccentric than the motion of Occidental populations, though feebler between points. It is also much more natural,—so natural that it could not exist in Western civilization. The relative mobility of a European population and the Japanese population might be expressed by a comparison between certain high velocities of vibration and certain low ones. But the high velocities would represent, in such a comparison, the consequence of artificial force applied; the slower vibrations would not. And this difference of kind would mean more than surface indications could announce. In one sense, Americans may be right in thinking themselves great

travellers. In another, they are certainly wrong; the man of the people in America cannot compare, as a traveller, with the man of the people in Japan. And of course, in considering relative mobility of populations, one must consider chiefly the great masses, the workers,—not merely the small class of wealth. In their own country, the Japanese are the greatest travellers of any civilized people. They are the greatest travellers because, even in a land composed mainly of mountain chains, they recognize no obstacles to travel. The Japanese who travels most is not the man who needs railways or steamers to carry him.

Now, with us, the common worker is incomparably less free than the common worker in Japan. He is less free because of the more complicated mechanism of Occidental societies, whose forces tend to agglomeration and solid integration. He is less free because the social and industrial machinery on which he must depend reshapes him to its own particular requirements, and always so as to evolve some special and artificial capacity at the cost of other inherent capacity. He is less free because he must live at a standard making it impossible for him to win financial independence by mere thrift. To achieve any such independence, he must possess exceptional character and exceptional faculties greater than those of thousands of exceptional competitors equally eager to escape from the same thralldom. In brief, then, he is less independent because the special character of his civilization numbs his natural power to live without the help of machinery or large capital. To live thus artificially means to lose, sooner or later, the power of independent movement. Before a Western man can move, he has many things to consider. Before a Japanese moves, he has nothing to consider. He simply leaves the place he dislikes, and goes to the place he wishes, without any trouble. There is nothing to prevent him. Poverty is not an obstacle, but a

stimulus. Impedimenta he has none, or only such as he can dispose of in a few minutes. Distances have no significance for him. Nature has given him perfect feet that can spring him over fifty miles a day without pain; a stomach whose chemistry can extract ample nourishment from food on which no European could live; and a constitution that scorns heat, cold, and damp alike, because still unimpaired by unhealthy clothing, by superfluous comforts, by the habit of seeking warmth from grates and stoves, and by the habit of wearing leather shoes.

It seems to me that the character of our footgear signifies more than is commonly supposed. The footgear represents in itself a check upon individual freedom. It signifies this even in costliness; but in form it signifies infinitely more. It has distorted the Western foot out of the original shape, and rendered it incapable of the work for which it was evolved. The physical results are not limited to the foot. Whatever acts as a check, directly or indirectly, upon the organs of locomotion must extend its effects to the whole physical constitution. Does the evil stop even there? Perhaps we submit to conventions the most absurd of any existing in any civilization, because we have too long submitted to the tyranny of shoemakers. There may be defects in our politics, in our social ethics, in our religious system, more or less related to the habit of wearing leather shoes. Submission to the cramping of the body must certainly aid in developing submission to the cramping of the mind.

The Japanese man of the people—the skilled labourer able to underbid without effort any Western artisan in the same line of industry—remains happily independent of both shoemakers and tailors. His feet are good to look at, his body is healthy, and his heart is free. If he desire to travel a thousand miles, he can get ready for his journey in five minutes. His whole outfit need not cost seventy-five cents; and all his baggage can



be put into a handkerchief. On ten dollars he can travel for a year without work, or he can travel simply on his ability to work, or he can travel as a pilgrim. You may reply that any savage can do the same thing. Yes, but any civilized man cannot; and the Japanese has been a highly civilized man for at least a thousand years. Hence his present capacity to threaten Western manufacturers.

We have been too much accustomed to associate this kind of independent mobility with the life of our own beggars and tramps, to have any just conception of its intrinsic meaning. We have thought of it also in connection with unpleasant things,—uncleanliness and bad smells. But, as Professor Chamberlain has well said, “a Japanese crowd is the sweetest in the world.” Your Japanese tramp takes his hot bath daily, if he has a fraction of a cent to pay for it, or his cold bath, if he has not. In his little bundle there are combs, toothpicks, razors, toothbrushes. He never allows himself to become unpleasant. Reaching his destination, he can transform himself into a visitor of very nice manners, and faultless though of simple attire.*

Ability to live without furniture, without impedimenta, with the least possible amount of neat clothing. shows more than the advantage held by this Japanese race in the struggle of life; it shows also the real character of some weaknesses in our own civilization. It forces reflection upon the useless multiplicity

* Critics have tried to make fun of Sir Edwin Arnold's remark that a Japanese crowd smells like a geranium-flower. Yet the simile is exact! The perfume called *jako*, when sparingly used, might easily be taken for the odour of a musk-geranium. In almost any Japanese assembly including women, a slight perfume of *jako* is discernible; for the robes worn have been laid in drawers containing a few grains of *jako*. Except for this delicate scent, a Japanese crowd is absolutely odourless.

of our daily wants. We must have meat and bread and butter; glass windows and fire; hats, white shirts, and woollen underwear; boots and shoes; trunks, bags and boxes; bedsteads, mattresses, sheets, and blankets: all of which a Japanese can do without, and is really better off without. Think for a moment how important an article of Occidental attire is the single costly item of white shirts! Yet even the linen shirt, the so-called "badge of a gentleman," is in itself a useless garment. It gives neither warmth nor comfort. It represents in our fashions the survival of something—once a luxurious class distinction, but to-day meaningless and useless as the buttons sewn on the outside of coat-sleeves.

v

The absence of any huge signs of the really huge things that Japan has done bears witness to the very peculiar way in which her civilization has been working. It cannot forever so work; but it has so worked thus far with amazing success. Japan is producing without capital, in our large sense of the word. She has become industrial without becoming essentially mechanical and artificial. The vast rice crop is raised upon millions of tiny, tiny farms; the silk crop, in millions of small poor homes; the tea crop, on countless little patches of soil. If you visit Kyoto to order something from one of the greatest porcelain makers in the world, one whose products are known better in London and in Paris than even in Japan, you will find the factory to be a wooden cottage in which no American farmer would live. The greatest maker of *cloisonné* vases, who may ask you two hundred dollars for something five inches high, produces his miracles behind a two-story frame dwelling containing perhaps six small rooms. The best girdles of silk made in Japan, and famous throughout the Empire, are woven

in a house that cost scarcely five hundred dollars to build. The work is, of course, hand-woven. But the factories weaving by machinery—and weaving so well as to ruin foreign industries of far vaster capacity—are hardly more imposing, with very few exceptions. Long, light, low one-story or two-story sheds they are, about as costly to erect as a row of wooden stables with us. Yet sheds like these turn out silks that sell all round the world. Sometimes only by inquiry, or by the humming of the machinery, can you distinguish a factory from an old *yashiki*, or an old-fashioned Japanese school building,—unless indeed you can read the Chinese characters over the garden gate. Some big brick factories and breweries exist; but they are very few, and even when close to the foreign settlements, they seem incongruities in the landscape.

Our own architectural monstrosities and our Babels of machinery have been brought into existence by vast integrations of industrial capital. But such integrations do not exist in the Far East; indeed, the capital to make them does not exist. And supposing that in the course of a few generations there should form in Japan corresponding combinations of money power, it is not easy to suppose correspondences in architectural construction. Even two-story edifices of brick have given bad results in the leading commercial centre; and earthquakes seem to condemn Japan to perpetual simplicity in building. The very land revolts against the imposition of Western architecture, and occasionally even opposes the new course of traffic by pushing railroad lines out of level and out of shape.

Not industry alone still remains thus unintegrated; government itself exhibits a like condition. Nothing is fixed except the Throne. Perpetual change is identical with state policy. Ministers, governors, superintendents, inspectors, all high civil and military officials, are shifted at irregular and surprisingly

short intervals, and hosts of smaller officials scatter each time with the whirl. The province in which I passed the first twelvemonth of my residence in Japan has had four different governors in five years. During my stay at Kumamoto, and before the war had begun, the military command of that important post was three times changed. The government college had in three years three directors. In educational circles, especially, the rapidity of such changes has been phenomenal. There have been five different ministers of education in my own time, and more than five different educational policies. The twenty-six thousand public schools are so related in their management to the local assemblies that, even were no other influences at work, constant change would be inevitable because of the changes in the assemblies. Directors and teachers keep circling from post to post; there are men little more than thirty years old who have taught in almost every province of the country. That any educational system could have produced any great results under these conditions seems nothing short of miraculous.

We are accustomed to think that some degree of stability is necessary to all real progress, all great development. But Japan has given proof irrefutable that enormous development is possible without any stability at all. The explanation is in the race character,—a race character in more ways than one the very opposite of our own. Uniformly mobile, and thus uniformly impressionable, the nation has moved unitedly in the direction of great ends; submitting the whole volume of its forty millions to be moulded by the ideas of its rulers, even as sand or as water is shaped by wind. And this submissiveness to reshaping belongs to the old conditions of its soul life,—old conditions of rare unselfishness and perfect faith. The relative absence from the national character of egotistical individualism has been the saving of an empire; has enabled

a great people to preserve its independence against prodigious odds. Wherefore Japan may well be grateful to her two great religions, the creators and the preservers of her moral power: to Shinto, which taught the individual to think of his Emperor and of his country before thinking either of his own family or of himself; and to Buddhism, which trained him to master regret, to endure pain, and to accept as eternal law the vanishing of things loved and the tyranny of things hated.

To-day there is visible a tendency to hardening,—a danger of changes leading to the integration of just such an officialism as that which has proved the curse and the weakness of China. The moral results of the new education have not been worthy of the material results. The charge of want of "individuality," in the accepted sense of pure selfishness, will scarcely be made against the Japanese of the next century. Even the compositions of students already reflect the new conception of intellectual strength only as a weapon of offence, and the new sentiment of aggressive egotism. "Impermanency," writes one, with a fading memory of Buddhism in his mind, "is the nature of our life. We see often persons who were rich yesterday, and are poor to-day. This is the result of human competition, according to the law of evolution. We are exposed to that competition. We must fight each other, even if we are not inclined to do so. With what sword shall we fight? With the sword of knowledge, forged by education."

Well, there are two forms of the cultivation of Self. One leads to the exceptional development of the qualities which are noble, and the other signifies something about which the less said the better. But it is not the former which the New Japan is now beginning to study. I confess to being one of those who believe that the human heart, even in the history

of a race, may be worth infinitely more than the human intellect, and that it will sooner or later prove itself infinitely better able to answer all the cruel enigmas of the Sphinx of Life. I still believe that the old Japanese were nearer to the solution of those enigmas than are we, just because they recognized moral beauty as greater than intellectual beauty. And, by way of conclusion, I may venture to quote from an article on education by Ferdinand Brunetière:—

“ All our educational measures will prove vain, if there be no effort to force into the mind, and to deeply impress upon it, the sense of those fine words of Lamennais: ‘ *Human society is based upon mutual giving, or upon the sacrifice of man for man, or of each man for all other men; and sacrifice is the very essence of all true society.* ’ It is this that we have been unlearning for nearly a century; and if we have to put ourselves to school afresh, it will be in order that we may learn it again. Without such knowledge there can be no society and no education,—not, at least, if the object of education be to form man for society. Individualism is to-day the enemy of education, as it is also the enemy of social order. It has not been so always; but it has so become. It will not be so forever; but it is so now. And without striving to destroy it—which would mean to fall from one extreme into another—we must recognize that, no matter what we wish to do for the family, for society, for education, and for the country, it is against individualism that the work will have to be done.”

—Lafcadio Hearn

POPULARITY

There are two kinds of popularity which I will call intimate and long-distance popularity, and the first is far more real than the second. A man who is intimately popular is liked by those who know him; a man who is popular at long distance has, by some means, succeeded in propagating a favourable notion of himself among those who do not know him. The two kinds of popularity may go together, but often they are separate, and the man who enjoys long-distance popularity is disliked at close quarters.

Intimate popularity is always a proof of some virtue. If a man is liked by those who meet him, he may have many defects and even vices, but still he is liked for a cause, even though it be unknown to those who like him. His society gives pleasure; and it does so because he himself takes pleasure in the society of others, which means that he is disposed to like rather than to dislike them. It is to him a pleasure to meet those he has never met before; he expects to find them good company, and therefore is good company himself. He is ready to take risks in social intercourse, and will not wait to discover whether you are a bore before he opens out to you. He is, in fact, sanguine about a human nature, and we like those who are sanguine, especially about ourselves, more than those who despond; they fill us with their own vitality and make us sharers in their own enjoyment.

You may say that this easy, instinctive liking is a slight virtue: but it is a virtue, for it makes you happy. It is better to like people for no particular reason than to dislike them

without reason, better to make them happy than to make them miserable. The man who is intimately popular may be vain, but he is not an egotist—he is more interested in others than in himself; he enjoys, no doubt, the exercise of his social arts, but that is worth enjoying; he is a hedonist, but one who also gives pleasure to others. Very likely he would not go much out of his way to do you a good turn, but he would rather do you a good than a bad one, and his friendship, if not deep, is large; indeed he might plead for himself that he has too many friends to be deeply involved with any of them. We are apt to be unjust to him if we find that he seems to promise more than he performs; but there is some egotism in our injustice. We have no right to expect that he will think of us when we are absent just because he is so sympathetic when we are present. By this sympathy he does give us something and for that we should be grateful. Clearly he cannot feel deeply for all those whose society he enjoys, and why should he feel deeply for us more than the rest? It is not fair to call him a humbug because he forgets us, as soon as our back is turned, for someone else. His enjoyment of our society is quite genuine; he does not make up to us with any ulterior design, for, if he did, we should not enjoy his society; we do enjoy it, and for that we ought to be grateful.

But the way to be intimately popular is, above all, not to judge. The saying, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged,' is commonly taken for a divine command, but it is also a statement of fact. Nothing makes us dislike a man so much as the knowledge that he is always judging us and all men, that his instinctive reaction is judgment. A man who has the habit of judging others may be respected, as we say, but he is also disliked; and while the respect is forced the dislike is hearty. If we can, we retaliate upon him by judging him with all the

severity at our command. We seek eagerly for his weakness, and when we have found it insist upon it, as if it were a valuable scientific discovery, for it is indeed a discovery that liberates us from our unwilling admiration of him. When it comes to judging we feel two can play at that game. So it happens that a man who has the habit of judging, and who has overawed the world by his habit, as if he sat always in wig and robes in the seat of judgment, is suddenly and by universal consent dethroned. This has happened in literature to Carlyle. He was always judging everyone, and he overawed the world while alive. But now he is judged more severely than he deserves both as a writer and as a man, while Lamb of whom he spoke with bitter contempt is praised, more perhaps than he deserves, because he never seems to judge anyone, but rather enjoys the society of mankind. We are pleased to find that whereas Carlyle judged men by an heroic standard, Lamb in his way was a hero. Perhaps it was because Aristides had the habit of judging, that the unknown Athenian grew weary of hearing him called the just. What we desire from each other is not justice—for who knows what that is?—but liking; and we give liking rather than justice to those who enjoy our society too well to judge us. We may criticize them, but our criticism is only skin deep; we do not wish to discover anything against them because we know they do not wish to discover anything against us. In their society we get a holiday from judgment altogether, and that is one reason why we enjoy it. They may not be Christians, but at least they do not feel or think or act on any perverse and anti-Christian principle. They may not have attained to Charity in the high Pauline sense, but at least they have attained to good-nature by instinct.

Many humble people are popular for these reasons; but if a man can keep this good-nature, this freedom from

judgment, this enjoyment of other people's society, when he
has achieved eminence, then he is popular indeed. For,
 while most of us are instinctively and meanly on our guard
 against the advances of the humble, we are all flattered by
 the advances of the eminent; if they seem to have taken a
 fancy to us, we take a fancy to them. They win popularity
 easily, and that is a dangerous temptation to them. For a
man may have a natural spontaneous virtue, and then become
aware of it and exploit it. The successful are often afraid
 of envy, and have an uneasy sense that the world may
 suddenly combine to pull them down. There is to them
 something incalculable in the common opinion that gives them
 their reputation, and they fear that it may suddenly veer
 like the wind. So they try to ensure themselves against
 such a change by being agreeable to everyone; they will make
 friends wherever they go, so that they may not be overcome
 by unknown enemies. And they do naturally enjoy the
 exercise of their social power, which is, of course, enormously
 increased by their eminence. But the mischief of this is
 not so much that they get a habit of insincerity as that they
 waste their energy in making themselves agreeable and lose
 the power of saying no. A man in any walk of life, whether
he be lawyer or artist or statesman or man of science, when
he has achieved excellence can keep it only by hard work.
 If he spends half his time in making himself agreeable, he
 will be more concerned with his reputation than with his
 work, and his work will deteriorate; and so finally will his
 reputation. Further, if he gets the habit of exploiting his
 pleasant manners, they will become mechanical and cease even
 to be agreeable, and he will lose even the popularity for which
 he has made so many sacrifices. For to succeed one must be
 an artist even in social intercourse, one must really enjoy it;

and the polite formulæ of the eminent are too obvious to give enjoyment.

Still, intimate popularity is worth having, if only for its own sake; but long-distance popularity is not worth having for its own sake; it is always a means to an end, like propaganda; it is, in fact, a kind of personal propaganda and no less dangerous than other kinds.

One may see the difference between the two kinds of popularity more clearly in the case of a writer. There are great writers who gain and who keep an intimate popularity, who are read and enjoyed, it may seem beyond their merits, because in their works they express a natural liking for mankind, because they themselves enjoy rather than judge. Among these are Dickens and the elder Dumas and Shakespeare himself. All of these would rather enjoy mankind than judge them. Even their dislikes are hearty and spontaneous; and the characters they dislike are those who themselves dislike others. There may be reactions against such writers; but through the fiercest reaction they are still read and enjoyed, for they make their readers happy. The elder Dumas, for instance, is at present little thought of in France, but he is still, I believe, read far more than Flaubert, who is always expressing judgments and dislikes, and is as full of unconscious malice as Dumas of unconscious enjoyment.

These writers win an intimate popularity because of a real virtue, and their sins which are often many are forgiven them, because they have loved much. The sins of Dickens are enormous, yet, as I read him, I find myself averting my eyes from them as Shem and Japheth would not look at Noah drunk; and that is because I get so much delight from reading him, to read him makes me happy. I feel that he would like even me, whereas a writer like Flaubert seems to address

himself to me, and all other readers, without contempt only because he has never met us; behind all his books there is an inexorable and malicious judgment passed by one who after all had no more right to be always judging than anyone else. But my liking of Dickens and such writers, even if too partial, does come of a real and close acquaintance. There are other writers who obtain a long-distance popularity, not because of any real merit, but because by some means or other they contrive to spread an idea of themselves and their genius which is not true at all; and this is the secret of long-distance popularity, whether enjoyed by a politician, a writer, a priest, or any kind of public character. Always they have, sometimes consciously, usually unconsciously, spread a notion of themselves among a public too ignorant and busy to exercise any right judgment yet eager to find a hero. For mankind desires a hero to worship; it makes life more exciting to believe that somewhere there is a wonderful man actually living, one who knows all the secrets of the human heart, or can save society, or can voice all the inarticulate yearnings and ideals of the people, and if for a penny or so you can every week buy a newspaper in which this hero tells the world what ought to be done, then you get immense comfort from that newspaper, even if it contradicts itself once a fortnight, and for the most part says nothing intelligible. Once the notion is spread that it is written by a man who knows, that notion persists if he can go on talking nonsense with the air of one who knows, and of one who is impelled to speak out by an urgent love of truth and justice. For it is a curious fact about this long-distance popularity that, after it is once established, it is not destroyed by closer contact. If a preacher or speaker gets a name for eloquence and inspiration, he too may talk nonsense for ever, provided he does it with an air of conviction. The crowds, who assemble to listen

to him, bring with them their idea of him which even he cannot destroy. His very vagueness helps him, for they can read into it what they will, and all go away believing that he said what they expected him to say. There are at the present time several of such heroes, all of whom won the war; though what they did to win it neither they nor anyone else can tell. It may be indeed, that if they had been allowed to wage the war in their own way, they would have ended it soon without defeat; but it is more probable that they had no way of their own ever present to their minds; their business was to shout directions through a megaphone, but directions happily so vague that no one could obey them even if he would. Not one of these was put to the test like their forerunner Cleon, whom the Athenians suddenly made a commander-in-chief, and who was luckily killed in battle before he could do much harm. •

There is a kind of clown called a Marcelline who makes you laugh by pretending to share the work others are doing. When they are rolling up a carpet, he walks behind and imitates their movements in a bland and encouraging manner. Long-distance popularity is achieved in politics and journalism by the same means, except that in these cases the Marcelline is not laughed at but actually deceives others and himself. They, and he, think he is winning the war and what not, by his bland and encouraging, or fierce and obstructive notions; and when the thing is done, he turns round and bows and gets the applause, while those who have really done it are mopping their brows behind the scenes. But it would be an error to think that this kind of Marcelline is without talent. He needs great energy, but it is spent not in doing anything worth doing, but in spreading an heroic idea of himself. He is in fact like a tradesman who uses great business ability in puffing a worthless patent medicine. What you pay for is the advertisement, and a country

which gives power to Marcellines will certainly pay for their advertisements and pay very heavily.

In fact one of the chief problems of any large community like our own is to free itself from the spell of long-distance popularity, to find some means of discouraging the arts by which it is won. For it is certain that a man who achieves long-distance popularity will not have much time or energy for doing anything else. In that also he is like the tradesman who spends all his money on advertisements, and has none over to spend upon a good article. And the temptation to any unscrupulous man of talent and energy to aim at long-distance popularity is now enormous, if that popularity seems to him worth having. The newspapers are instruments ready to his hand; they seldom even try to have any judgment; if once a man can get himself talked about they will continue to talk about him; he becomes news as if he were the co-respondent in an everlasting divorce case. Millions of people hear of him who never hear of those who do the real work of the world, just because he is heard of, he has power. What he says is reported, what he writes is read. If he stands for Parliament, people vote for him; and all the while he is incapable of any excellence, because all his energy goes in self-propaganda. It is so even with many popular writers. They would never write so badly if it were not that most of their energy goes in advertisement; but since they are well advertised, the public finds in their books virtues that are not there; just as it finds in patent medicines healing properties that are not there. So we are misled every way, because we are a community too large to know our public men except by report, and because we have got the habit of judging even books, not by what we find in them, but by the common report of them.

The only remedy seems to be in a psychology that does not yet exist. We must learn the symptoms of self-propaganda, and the symptoms with which it affects us. The man who aims at long-distance popularity behaves in a certain way, of which some of us are already dimly aware; but at present neither the public, nor he himself, know that he is a criminal of a very dangerous kind. What is needed is a science of the mind, much more precise than any which yet exists, to put us on our guard against him; for until we are on our guard we shall remain at the mercy of every kind of imposture, which is the more dangerous because it is usually half unconscious.

—A. Clutton-Brock

BORES

It requires a sense of superiority, assurance and self confidence, to write about bores at all, except as one of them. But since your true bore is always unconscious of his borishness, and indeed usually thinks of himself as the most companionable of men, to write as one of them is to acquit oneself of the stigma.

None the less, at some time, I fear, everybody is a bore, because everybody now and again has a fixed idea to impart, and the fixed ideas of the few are the boredom of the many. Also, even the least self-centred of men can now and then have a personal experience sufficiently odd to lose its true proportions and force him to inflict it over much on others. But bores as a rule are bores always, for egotism is beyond question the bore's foundation stone; his belief being that what interests him and involves himself as a central figure must interest you. Since he lives all the time, and all the time something is happening in which he is the central figure, he has always something new to discourse upon: himself, his house, his garden, himself, his wife, his children, himself, his car, his handicap, himself, his health, his ancestry, himself, the strange way in which, without inviting them to, all kinds of people confide in him and ask his advice, his humorous way with waiters, his immunity from influenza, his travels, the instinct which always leads him to the best restaurants, his clothes, his dentist, his freedom from shibboleths, he being one of those men who look upon the open air as the best church, his possible ignorance of the arts but certitude as to what he himself likes, his triumphs over the income-tax people. These are the happy men, these world's axle-trees.

(I have been referring to bores exclusively as men. Whether that is quite just, I am not sure; but I shall leave it there.)

Bores are happy largely because they have so much to tell and come so well out of it; but chiefly because they can find people to tell it to. The tragedy is, they can always find their listeners, me almost first. And why can they? Why can even notorious bores always be sure of an audience? The answer is, the ineradicable kindness of human nature. Few men are strong enough to say, 'For Heaven's sake, go away, you weary me.' Bores make cowards of us all, and we are left either to listen and endure or to take refuge in craven flight. We see them in the distance and turn down side streets or hasten from the room. One man I know has a compact with a page-boy, whose duty it is, whenever my friend is attacked by a certain bore in the club, to hasten up and say he is wanted on the telephone. An ingenious device, but it must not be worked too often; because my friend, though he can stoop to deceit and subterfuge, would not for anything let the bore think that he was avoiding him; would not bring grief to that complacent candid face. For it is one of the bore's greatest assets that he has a simplicity that disarms. Astute, crafty men are seldom bores; very busy men are seldom bores.

Of all bores the most repellent specimen is the one who comes close up; the buttonholing bore. This is the kind described by a friend of mine with a vivid sense of phrase as 'the man who spreads birdlime all over you.' A bore who keeps a reasonable way off can be dealt with; but when they lean on you, you are done. It is worst when they fix your eyes, only a foot away, and tell a funny story that isn't funny. Nothing is so humiliating as to have to counterfeit laughter at

the bidding of a bore; but we do it. The incurable weakness and benignancy of human nature once again!

Then there is the bore who begins a funny story, and although you tell him you have heard it, doesn't stop. What should be done with him? Another of the worst types of bore is the man who says, 'Where should we be without our sense of humour?' He is even capable of saying, 'Nothing but my unfailing sense of humour saved me.' There is also the man who says, '“Live and let live,” as my poor dear father used to say.'

There was once an eccentric peer—I forget both his name and the place where I read about him—who had contracted, all unconsciously, the habit of thinking aloud; and in this world of artifice, where society is cemented and sustained very largely by a compromise between what we think and what we say, his thoughts were very often at variance with his words. One of the stories in the *Memoirs* in which I found him describes how he met an acquaintance in St. James's Street, and, after muttering quite audibly to himself for a few minutes as they walked side by side, 'Confound it, what a nuisance meeting this fellow. I've always disliked him. But now that we have met I suppose I must ask him to dinner,' he stopped and said with every appearance of cordiality, 'You'll dine with us this evening, won't you?' Well, as a sheet of armour-plate against bores, I don't think we could do much better than cultivate the habit of thinking truthfully aloud. Unless we can do this, or train ourselves to be downright offensive, there is no remedy against bores. Except total evasion. No bore ever says, after no matter how many hints, 'I'll avoid that man in future; I know I bore him.'

So they will always flourish. But if a certain famous weekly humorous paper were to cease publication (distasteful and



incredible thought!) there would automatically be a decrease in bore topics, because then no one could any longer repeat those sayings of his children which are 'good enough for *Punch*.'

—*E. V. Lucas*

THOUGHTS ON SLEEP

Many years ago I committed to memory a short poem which I found in the *Sydney Bulletin*. It ran thus:

I have lived and I have loved;
I have waked and I have slept;
I have sung and I have danced;
I have smiled and I have wept;
I have won and wasted treasure;
I have had my fill of pleasure;
And all these things were weariness,
And some of them were dreariness.
And all these things, but two things,
Were emptiness and pain:
And Love—it was the best of them;
And Sleep—worth all the rest of them.

It was not till the other day, I might remark, that I found that the author was Charles Mackay, and that the poem continued thus mournfully:

Worth everything but Love unto my spirit and my brain,
Be still my friend, O Slumber,
Till my days complete their number,
For Love shall never, never, return to me again.

I still believe the poet's words to be true: sleep is the second best thing, and how differently we view it, at different stages of life! I was in a house the other day where a small boy was kicking and screaming because his nurse had come to get him ready for the night, and an old man was querulously inquiring every few minutes if it was not yet bedtime; for to

youth sleep is an interrupter of fun and excitement; to age it is an escape from life. Terrible, I thought, to live so long that escape is desirable. That sleep should be desirable, yes; but not escape. Not yet; and those tragic lines of another Scotch and also little-known poet came back to me:

Life, thou wast once so sweet and bright
 I grudged each hour that slumber stole
 From happy day, though happy night
 Brought ever dreams of new delight
 To haunt the slumbers of the soul.

Now thou art all so dark, so drear,
 I pray for sleep to drown the pain,
 Though in his grisly train appear
 A thousand phantom shapes of fear
 To wring the heart and sear the brain.

Having recently returned from the longest voyage I ever took I can attest that that line in the old song about being rocked in the cradle of the deep is not a mere poetical trope. The cradle of the deep actually does rock to slumber. Never have I slept so long, so soundly, and so often; and such noises and annoyances as are apparently inseparable from a ship—the creakings and strainings, sailors' footfalls on the deck above, the splash of the hose or rasp of the holy-stone—do not really disturb, are not really anything more than emphasizeers of one's bliss: coming in time to be a part of one's repose, awaking once just enough to remind one how blessed and beneficial this vast cradle is: The sea, one might remark, paraphrasing an old saying—the sea that rocks the cradle soothes the world.

Sleep at sea is peaceful and placid, not dreamless, but accompanied by such dreams as please and quickly fade. Indeed, the dreams dreamed in the cradle of the deep are more like the dreams of the day; light and fanciful and seldom unhappy

or frightening, whereas sleep on those other moving beds, the berths of the wagon-lit, is, in my case, accompanied by the choicest nightmares. So crowded are they with incident and grotesquerie that I look forward to every night-railway journey with excitement. And the waking is exciting too, for I wake only when the train stops, with that long-drawn sigh from the brakes and strange foreign voices coming out of the hush. Then the guard's trumpet sounds and I am instantly asleep once more and again among my chimeras and weird absurdities.

Doctors say that dreamless sleep is best, and then go on to complicate this remark by the statement that all our dreaming is packed into the minutes immediately preceding awakening. If my own impressions are true, I dream all night long and never sleep without dreaming. But almost never are my dreams worth remembering and very seldom do I remember them. Never do I have such dreams as one told me recently by a friend, who, in her sleep, found herself, after an operation, on a yacht, on which, to her surprise, was an old acquaintance. To her surprise, because she knew him to be dead.

On being taxed with the inconsistency, he replied: 'Yes, I'm dead all right; but that's no reason why I shouldn't be on a yacht with you.'

Having assimilated this startling assertion, 'Tell me,' she said, 'what it's like to be dead.'

'It's just the same as being alive,' he replied, 'only you don't have any fun.'

'Fun?'

'Well, adventure. You don't have any adventure, because, you see, there's no danger. Being dead, you can't die; and half the fun of life is in wondering when you're going to die and in running risks. For instance, if I were to fall over that handrail into the sea it wouldn't be any fun, because I'm

drowned already, so to speak. The question of rescue or failure to rescue has ceased to matter.'

The art of snatching forty winks whenever one will is difficult to acquire, but far better worth struggling for than sagacity at bridge or efficiency at golf, which seem to be the two commonest goals now set before ambition's gaze. At least that is my belief to-day. And once I had as low an opinion of sleep as any proprietor of a night club. I now know that there is more refreshment and stimulation in a nap, even of the briefest, than in all the alcohol ever distilled. If he who sleeps, dines, he who naps, nips; but he nips the true Hippocras, the real elixir. In this matter of stealing forty, or even thirty-nine winks, dogs and cats should be our models. No, not cats—for they may be deceiving us all the time—but dogs; for dogs can fall asleep instantly, anywhere, and be awake instantly, anywhere.

The friend of humanity who should confer sleep upon the sleepless would be perhaps the truest friend of all. I don't remember if the late M. Coué (who has been so tactless as to die) claimed that his mental soothing syrup was sovran against insomnia; but if it was, he was a benefactor indeed. Undoubtedly, the constant repetition of any form of words is sedative; but not unless the mind behind the words is a blank. That is the difficulty: to make one's mind a blank. And especially must one strive to eliminate the future. Far off things, even unhappy, can be thought about with safety; but nothing that has not happened yet, but may happen, no matter whether grave or gay, must be considered.

We talk generalizingly of sleep, but really it has many different varieties. On some nights one sleeps harder than on others; just as on some days one works harder, or plays harder. There are occasions when five hours' sleep can be

more refreshing and restorative than ten. I found this truth first expressed, if I remember rightly, by a character in one of Marryat's novels. The mere existence of night clubs helps to prove how different are the sleeping needs of different people. Should I be tempted to sup at one of these places I am the worse for it the next day; I rise with difficulty, longing to be allowed to slumber again, and when the afternoon comes I am but one remove from a somnambulist. Yet I had seen all around me regular attenders, not all young, many of whom I know have to be at work early the next morning and who were showing no sign of wear and tear. Why should they be so privileged and I not? It would not surprise me if I never went to a night club again, not from fear of the police, but simply because sleep becomes steadily more and more necessary and more and more pleasant. One has to make a choice, and I prefer sleep to saxophones; also I now sleep as a rule very well and, oddly enough, am rather proud of it.

I say oddly because most people of my age, I observe, are ashamed of sleeping. If you ask a man how he slept last night, the chances are that he will say he hardly closed his eyes. Indeed, there will probably be no need to ask him: he will volunteer the information. If a census could be taken it would be found that, according to their own testimony, there was practically no sleep by adults in England at all last night. Everyone was hours getting to sleep and then woke up again at once. The facts were, of course, otherwise; but it seems to be agreed that not to have been able to sleep is the right pose. All these people probably slept soundly, waking at most for a few minutes, and then peacefully dropping off again; but so fond of this despised slumber are they that a minute of it lost at four a.m. seems to them like an hour; hence their



peevish exaggeration. None the less the man who complains of his broken night has, I think, a slight advantage over the man who slept like a top, like a log, or like the dead.

Like the dead. This reminds me that the French say that every nap is a 'little death.' Has it not perhaps been mercifully ordained that the more we grow to like sleep the less we come to fear the tomb ?

—*E. V. Lucas*

THE WORLD AS IT COULD BE MADE

In the daily lives of most men and women, fear plays a greater part than hope: they are more filled with the thought of the possessions that others may take from them, than of the joy that they might create in their own lives and in the lives with which they come in contact.

It is not so that life should be lived.

Those whose lives are fruitful to themselves, to their friends, or to the world are inspired by hope and sustained by joy: they see in imagination the things that might be and the way in which they are to be brought into existence. In their private relations, they are not preoccupied with anxiety lest they should lose such affection and respect as they receive: they are engaged in giving affection and respect freely, and the reward comes of itself without their seeking. In their work, they are not haunted by jealousy of competitors, but concerned with the actual matter that has to be done. In politics, they do not spend time and passion defending unjust privileges of their class or nation, but they aim at making the world as a whole happier, less cruel, less full of conflict between rival greeds, and more full of human beings whose growth has not been dwarfed and stunted by oppression.

A life lived in this spirit—the spirit that aims at creating rather than possessing—has a certain fundamental happiness, of which it cannot be wholly robbed by adverse circumstances. This is the way of life recommended in the Gospels, and by all the great teachers of the world. Those who have found it are freed from the tyranny of fear, since what they value most in their lives is not at the mercy of outside power. If all men

could summon up the courage and the vision to live in this way in spite of obstacles and discouragement, there would be no need for the regeneration of the world to begin by political and economic reform: all that is needed in the way of reform would come automatically, without resistance, owing to the moral regeneration of individuals. But the teaching of Christ has been nominally accepted by the world for many centuries, and yet those who follow it are still persecuted as they were before the time of Constantine. Experience has proved that few are able to see through the apparent evils of an outcast's life to the inner joy that comes of faith and creative hope. If the domination of fear is to be overcome, it is not enough, as regards the mass of men, to preach courage and indifference to misfortune: it is necessary to remove the causes of fear, to make a good life no longer an unsuccessful one in a worldly sense, and to diminish the harm than can be inflicted upon those who are not wary in self-defence.

When we consider the evils in the lives we know of, we find that they may be roughly divided into three classes. There are, first, those due to physical nature: among these are death, pain, and the difficulty of making the soil yield a subsistence. These we will call "Physical evils." Second we may put those that spring from defects in the character or aptitudes of the sufferer: among these are ignorance, lack of will, and violent passions. These we will call "evils of character." Third come those that depend upon the power of one individual or group over another: these comprise, not only obvious tyranny but all interference with free development, whether by force or by excessive mental influence such as may occur in education. These we will call "evils of power." A social system may be judged by its bearing upon these three kinds of evils.

The distinction between the three kinds cannot be sharply drawn. Purely physical evil is a limit, which we can never be sure of having reached: we cannot abolish death, but we can often postpone it by science, and it may ultimately become possible to secure that the great majority shall live till old age; we cannot wholly prevent pain, but we can diminish it indefinitely by securing a healthy life for all; we cannot make the earth yield its fruits in any abundance without labour, but we can diminish the amount of the labour and improve its conditions until it ceases to be an evil. Evils of character are often the result of physical evil in the shape of illness, and still more often the result of evils of power, since tyranny degrades both those who exercise it and (as a rule) those who suffer it. Evils of power are intensified by evils of character in those who have power, and by fear of the physical evil which is apt to be the lot of those who have no power. For all these reasons, the three sorts of evil are intertwined. Nevertheless, speaking broadly, we may distinguish among our misfortunes: those which have their proximate cause in the material world, those which are mainly due to defects in ourselves, and those which spring from our being subject to the control of others.

The main methods of combating these evils are: for physical evils, science; for evils of character, education (in the widest sense) and a free outlet for all impulses that do not involve domination; for evils of power, the reform of the political and economic organization of society in such a way as to reduce to the lowest possible point the interference of one man with the life of another. We will begin with the third of these kinds of evil, because it is evils of power specially that Socialism and Anarchism have sought to remedy. Their protest against inequalities of wealth has rested mainly upon

their sense of the evils arising from the power conferred by wealth. This point has been well stated by Mr. G. D. H. Cole:—

What, I want to ask, is the fundamental evil in our modern Society which we should set out to abolish?

There are two possible answers to that question, and I am sure that very many well-meaning people would make the wrong one. They would answer POVERTY, when they ought to answer SLAVERY. Face to face every day with the shameful contrasts of riches and destitution, high dividends and low wages, and painfully conscious of the futility of trying to adjust the balance by means of charity, private or public, they would answer unhesitatingly that they stand for the ABOLITION OF POVERTY.

Well and good! On that issue every Socialist is with them. But their answer to my question is none the less wrong.

Poverty is the symptom: slavery the disease. The extremes of riches and destitution follow inevitably upon the extremes of license and bondage. The many are not enslaved because they are poor, they are poor because they are enslaved. Yet Socialists have all too often fixed their eyes upon the material misery of the poor without realizing that it rests upon the spiritual degradation of the slave.

I do not think any reasonable person can doubt that the evils of power in the present system are vastly greater than is necessary, nor that they might be immeasurably diminished by a suitable form of Socialism. A few fortunate people, it is true, are now enabled to live freely on rent or interest, and they could hardly have more liberty under another system. But the great bulk, not only of the very poor, but of all sections of wage-earners and even of the professional classes, are the slaves of the need for getting money. Almost all are compelled to work so hard that they have little leisure for enjoyment or for pursuits outside their regular occupation. Those who are able to retire in later middle age are bored, because they have not learnt how to fill their time when they are at liberty, and such interests as they once had apart from work have dried up. Yet these are the exceptionally fortunate: the majority have to work hard till old age, with the fear of destitution always

before them, the richer ones dreading that they will be unable to give their children the education or the medical care that they consider desirable, the poorer ones often not far removed from starvation. And almost all who work have no voice in the direction of their work; throughout the hours of labour they are mere machines carrying out the will of a master. Work is usually done under disagreeable conditions, involving pain and physical hardship. The only motive to work is wages: the very idea that work might be a joy, like the work of the artist, is usually scouted as utterly Utopian.

But by far the greater part of these evils are wholly unnecessary. If the civilized portion of mankind could be induced to desire their own happiness more than another's pain, if they could be induced to work constructively for improvements which they would share with all the world rather than destructively to prevent other classes or nations from stealing a march on them, the whole system by which the world's work is done might be reformed root and branch within a generation.

From the point of view of liberty, what system would be the best? In what direction should we wish the forces of progress to move?

From this point of view, neglecting for the moment all other considerations, I have no doubt that the best system would be one not far removed from that advocated by Kropotkin, but rendered more practicable by the adoption of the main principles of Guild Socialism. Since every point can be disputed, I will set down without argument the kind of organization of work that would seem best.

Education should be compulsory up to the age of sixteen, or perhaps longer; after that, it should be continued or not at the option of the pupil, but remain free (for those who desire it) up to at least the age of twenty-one. When education is finished,

no one should be *compelled* to work, and those who chose not to work should receive a bare livelihood, and be left completely free; but probably it would be desirable that there should be a strong public opinion in favour of work, so that only comparatively few should choose idleness. One great advantage of making idleness economically possible is that it would afford a powerful motive for making work not disagreeable; and no community where most work is disagreeable can be said to have found a solution of economic problems. I think it is reasonable to assume that few would choose idleness, in view of the fact that even now at least nine out of ten of those who have (say) £100 a year from investments prefer to increase their income by paid work.

Coming now to that great majority who will not choose idleness, I think we may assume that, with the help of science, and by the elimination of the vast amount of unproductive work involved in internal and international competition, the whole community could be kept in comfort by means of four hours' work a day. It is already being urged by experienced employers that their employees can actually produce as much in a six hours' day as they can when they work eight hours. In a world where there is a much higher level of technical instruction than there is now, the same tendency will be accentuated. People will be taught not only, as at present, one trade, or one small portion of trade, but several trades, so that they can vary their occupation according to the seasons and the fluctuations of demand. Every industry will be self-governing as regards all its internal affairs, and even separate factories will decide for themselves all questions that only concern those who work in them. There will not be capitalist management, as at present, but management by elected representatives, as in politics. Relations between different groups of producers will be settled

by the Guild Congress, matters concerning the community as the inhabitants of a certain area will continue to be decided by Parliament, while all disputes between Parliament and the Guild Congress will be decided by a body composed of representatives of both in equal numbers.

Payment will not be made, as at present, only for work actually required and performed, but for willingness to work. This system is already adopted in much of the better paid work: a man occupies a certain position, and retains it even at times when there happens to be very little to do. The dread of unemployment and loss of livelihood will no longer haunt men like a nightmare. Whether all who are willing to work will be paid equally, or whether exceptional skill will still command exceptional pay, is a matter which may be left to each Guild to decide for itself. An opera-singer who received no more pay than a scene-shifter might choose to be a scene-shifter until the system was changed: if so, higher pay would probably be found necessary. But if it were freely voted by the Guild, it could hardly constitute a grievance.

Whatever might be done towards making work agreeable, it is to be presumed that some trades would always remain unpleasant. Men could be attracted into these by higher pay or shorter hours, instead of being driven into them by destitution. The community would then have a strong economic motive for finding ways of diminishing the disagreeableness of these exceptional trades.

There would still have to be money, or something analogous to it, in any community such as we are imagining. The Anarchist plan of a free distribution of the total produce of work in equal shares does not get rid of the need for some standard of exchange value, since one man will choose to take his share in one form and another in another. When the day comes for

distributing luxuries, old ladies will not want their quota of cigars, nor young men their just proportion of lap-dog: this will make it necessary to know how many cigars are the equivalent of one lap-dog. Much the simplest way is to pay an income, as at present, and allow relative values to be adjusted according to demand. But if actual coin were paid, a man might hoard it and in time become a capitalist. To prevent this, it would be best to pay notes available only during a certain period, say one year from the date of issue. This would enable a man to save up for his annual holiday, but not to save indefinitely.

There is a very great deal to be said for the Anarchist plan of allowing necessities, and all commodities that can easily be produced in quantities adequate to any possible demand, to be given away freely to all who ask for them, in any amounts they may require. The question whether this plan should be adopted is, to my mind, a purely technical one: would it be, in fact, possible to adopt it without much waste and consequent diversion of labour to the production of necessities when it might be more usefully employed otherwise? I have not the means of answering this question, but I think it exceedingly probable that, sooner or later, with the continued improvement in the methods of production, this Anarchist plan will become feasible; and when it does, it certainly ought to be adopted.

Women in domestic work, whether married or unmarried, will receive pay as they would if they were in industry. This will secure the complete economic independence of wives, which is difficult to achieve in any other way, since mothers of young children ought not to be expected to work outside the home.

The expense of children will not fall, as at present, on the parents. They will receive, like adults, their share of neces-

saries, and their education will be free.¹ There is no longer to be the present competition for scholarships among the abler children: they will not be imbued with the competitive spirit from infancy, or forced to use their brains to an unnatural degree, with consequent listlessness and lack of health in later life. Education will be far more diversified than at present: greater care will be taken to adapt it to the needs of different types of young people. There will be more attempt to encourage initiative among pupils and less desire to fill their minds with a set of beliefs and mental habits regarded as desirable by the State, chiefly because they help to preserve the *status quo*. For the great majority of children it will probably be found desirable to have much more outdoor education in the country. And for older boys and girls whose interests are not intellectual or artistic, technical education, undertaken in a liberal spirit, is far more useful in promoting mental activity than book-learning, which they regard (however falsely) as wholly useless except for purposes of examination. The really useful education is that which follows the direction of the child's own instinctive interests, supplying knowledge for which it is seeking, not dry, detailed information wholly out of relation to its spontaneous desires.

Government and Law will still exist in our community, but both will be reduced to a minimum. There will still be acts which will be forbidden—for example, murder. But very nearly the whole of that part of the criminal law which deals with property will have become obsolete, and many of the motives which now produce murders will be no longer operative. Those who nevertheless still do commit crimes will not be blamed or

¹ Some may fear that the result would be an undue increase of population, but such fears I believe to be groundless.



regarded as wicked: they will be regarded as unfortunate, and kept in some kind of mental hospital until it is thought that they are no longer a danger. By education and freedom and the abolition of private capital, the number of crimes can be made exceedingly small. By the method of individual curative treatment, it will generally be possible to secure that a man's first offence shall also be his last, except in the case of lunatics and the feeble-minded, for whom of course a more prolonged but not less kindly detention may be necessary.

Government may be regarded as consisting of two parts: the one, the decisions of the community or its recognized organs; the other, the enforcing of those decisions upon all who resist them. The first part is not objected to by Anarchists. The second part, in an ordinary civilized State, may remain entirely in the background: those who have resisted a new law while it was being debated will, as a rule, submit to it when it is passed, because resistance is generally useless in a settled and orderly community. But the possibility of governmental force remains, and indeed is the very reason for the submission which makes force unnecessary. If, as Anarchists desire, there were no use of force by Government, the majority could still band themselves together and use force against the minority. The only difference would be that their army or their police force would be *ad hoc*, instead of being permanent and professional. The result of this would be that every one would have to learn how to fight, for fear a well-drilled minority should seize power and establish an old-fashioned oligarchic State. Thus the aim of the Anarchists seems hardly likely to be achieved by the methods which they advocate.

The reign of violence in human affairs, whether within a country or in its external relations, can only be prevented, if we have not been mistaken, by an authority able to declare all use

of force except by itself illegal, and strong enough to be obviously capable of making all other use of force futile, except when it could secure the support of public opinion as a defence of freedom or a resistance to injustice. Such an authority exists within a country: it is the State. But in international affairs it remains to be created. The difficulties are stupendous, but they must be overcome if the world is to be saved from periodical wars, each more destructive than any of its predecessors. Whether, after this war, a League of Nations will be formed, and will be capable of performing this task, it is as yet impossible to foretell. However that may be, some method of preventing wars will have to be established before our Utopia becomes possible. When once men *believe* that the world is safe from war, the whole difficulty will be solved: there will then no longer be any serious resistance to the disbanding of national armies and navies, and the substitution for them of a small international force for protection against uncivilized races. And when that stage has been reached peace will be virtually secure.

The practice of government by majorities, which Anarchists criticize, is in fact open to most of the objections which they urge against it. Still more objectionable is the power of the executive in matters vitally affecting the happiness of all, such as peace and war. But neither can be dispensed with suddenly. There are, however, two methods of diminishing the harm done by them. (1) Government by majorities can be made less oppressive by devolution, by placing the decision of questions primarily affecting only a section of the community in the hands of that section, rather than of a Central Chamber. In this way, men are no longer forced to submit to decisions made in a hurry by people mostly ignorant of the matter in hand and not personally interested. Autonomy for internal affairs should be given, not only to areas but to all groups, such as industries or



Churches, which have important common interests not shared by the rest of the community. (2) The great powers vested in the executive of a modern State are chiefly due to the frequent need of rapid decisions, especially as regards foreign affairs. If the danger of war were practically eliminated, more cumbrous but less autocratic methods would be possible, and the Legislature might recover many of the powers which the executive has usurped. By these two methods, the intensity of the interference with liberty involved in government can be gradually diminished. Some interference, and even some danger of unwarranted and despotic interference, is of the essence of government, and must remain so long as government remains. But until men are less prone to violence than they are now, a certain degree of governmental force seems the lesser of two evils. We may hope, however, that if once the danger of war is at an end, men's violent impulses will gradually grow less, the more so as, in that case, it will be possible to diminish enormously the individual power which now makes rulers autocratic and ready for almost any act of tyranny in order to crush opposition. The development of a world where even governmental force has become unnecessary (except against lunatics) must be gradual. But as a gradual process it is perfectly possible; and when it has been completed, we may hope to see the principles of Anarchism embodied in the management of communal affairs.

How will the economic and political system that we have outlined bear on the evils of character? I believe the effect will be quite extraordinarily beneficent.

The process of leading men's thought and imagination away from the use of force will be greatly accelerated by the abolition of the capitalist system, provided it is not succeeded by a form of State Socialism in which officials have enormous power. At present, the capitalist has more control over the lives of others

than any man ought to have; his friends have authority in the State; his economic power is the pattern for political power. In a world where all men and women enjoy economic freedom, there will not be the same habit of command, nor, consequently, the same love of despotism; a gentler type of character than that now prevalent will gradually grow up. Men are formed by their circumstances, not born ready-made. The bad effect of the present economic system on character, and the immensely better effect to be expected from communal ownership, are among the strongest reasons for advocating the change.

In the world as we have been imagining it, economic fear and most economic hope will be alike removed out of life. No one will be haunted by the dread of poverty or driven into ruthlessness by the hope of wealth. There will not be the distinction of social classes which now plays such an immense part in life. The unsuccessful professional man will not live in terror lest his children should sink in the scale; the aspiring employee will not be looking forward to the day when he can become a sweater in his turn. Ambitious young men will have to dream other day-dreams than that of business success and wealth wrung out of the ruin of competitors and the degradation of labour. In such a world, most of the nightmares that lurk in the background of men's minds will no longer exist; on the other hand, ambition and the desire to excel will have to take nobler forms than those that are encouraged by a commercial society. All those activities that really confer benefits upon mankind will be open, not only to the fortunate few but to all who have sufficient ambition and native aptitude. Science, labour-saving inventions, technical progress of all kinds, may be confidently expected to flourish far more than at present, since they will be the road to honour, and honour will have to replace money among those of the young who desire to achieve

success. Whether art will flourish in a Socialistic community depends upon the form of Socialism adopted; if the State, or any public authority (no matter what), insists upon controlling art, and only licensing those whom it regards as proficient, the result will be disaster. But if there is real freedom, allowing every man who so desires to take up an artist's career at the cost of some sacrifice of comfort, it is likely that the atmosphere of hope, and the absence of economic compulsion, will lead to a much smaller waste of talent than is involved in our present system, and to a much less degree of crushing of impulse in the mills of the struggle for life.

When elementary needs have been satisfied, the serious happiness of most men depends upon two things: their work and their human relations. In the world that we have been picturing, work will be free, not excessive, full of the interest that belongs to a collective enterprise in which there is rapid progress, with something of the delight of creation even for the humblest unit. And in human relations the gain will be just as great as in work. The only human relations that have value are those that are rooted in mutual freedom, where there is no domination and no slavery, no tie except affection, no economic or conventional necessity to preserve the external show when the inner life is dead. One of the most horrible things about commercialism is the way in which it poisons the relations of men and women. The evils of prostitution are generally recognized, but, great as they are, the effect of economic conditions on marriage seems to me even worse. There is not infrequently, in marriage, a suggestion of purchase, of acquiring a woman on condition of keeping her in a certain standard of material comfort. Often and often, a marriage hardly differs from prostitution except by being harder to escape from. The whole basis of these evils is economic. Economic causes make marriage a matter of

bargain and contract, in which affection is quite secondary, and its absence constitutes no recognized reason for liberation. Marriage should be a free, spontaneous meeting of mutual instinct, filled with happiness not unmingled with a feeling akin to awe: it should involve that degree of respect of each for the other that makes even the most trifling interference with liberty an utter impossibility, and a common life enforced by one against the will of the other an unthinkable thing of deep horror. It is not so that marriage is conceived by lawyers who make settlements, or by priests who give the name of "sacrament" to an institution which pretends to find something sanctifiable in the brutal lusts or drunken cruelties of a legal husband. It is not in a spirit of freedom that marriage is conceived by most men and women at present: the law makes it an opportunity for indulgence of the desire to interfere, where each submits to some loss of his or her own liberty, for the pleasure of curtailing the liberty of the other. And the atmosphere of private property makes it more difficult than it otherwise would be for any better ideal to take root.

It is not so that human relations will be conceived when the evil heritage of economic slavery has ceased to mould our instincts. Husbands and wives, parents and children, will be only held together by affection: where that has died, it will be recognized that nothing worth preserving is left. Because affection will be free, men and women will not find in private life an outlet and stimulus to the love of domineering, but all that is creative in their love will have the freer scope. Reverence for whatever makes the soul in those who are loved will be less rare than it is now: nowadays, many men love their wives in the way in which they love mutton, as something to devour and destroy. But in the love that goes with reverence there is a joy of quite another order than any to be found by mastery.

a joy which satisfies the spirit and not only the instincts; and satisfaction of instinct and spirit at once is necessary to a happy life, or indeed to any existence that is to bring out the best impulses of which a man or woman is capable.

In the world which we should wish to see, there will be more joy of life than in the drab tragedy of modern everyday existence. After early youth, as things are, most men are bowed down by forethought, no longer capable of light-hearted gaiety, but only of a kind of solemn jollification by the clock at the appropriate hours. The advice to "become as little children" would be good for many people in many respects, but it goes with another precept, "Take no thought for the morrow," which is hard to obey in a competitive world. There is often in men of science, even when they are quite old, something of the simplicity of a child: their absorption in abstract thought has held them aloof from the world, and respect for their work has led the world to keep them alive in spite of their innocence. Such men have succeeded in living as all men ought to be able to live; but as things are, the economic struggle makes their way of life impossible for the great majority.

What are we to say, lastly, of the effect of our projected world upon physical evil? Will there be less illness than there is at present? Will the produce of a given amount of labour be greater? Or will population press upon the limits of subsistence, as Malthus taught in order to refute Godwin's optimism?

I think the answer to all these questions turns, in the end, upon the degree of intellectual vigour to be expected in a community which has done away with the spur of economic competition. Will men in such a world become lazy and apathetic? Will they cease to think? Will those who do think find themselves confronted with an even more impenetrable wall of unreflecting conservatism than that which confronts

them at present ? These are important questions; for it is ultimately to science that mankind must look for their success in combating physical evils.

If the other conditions that we have postulated can be realized, it seems almost certain that there must be less illness than there is at present. Population will no longer be congested in slums; children will have far more of fresh air and open country; the hours of work will be only such as are wholesome, not excessive and exhausting as they are at present.

As for the progress of science, that depends very largely upon the degree of intellectual liberty existing in the new society. If all science is organized and supervised by the State, it will rapidly become stereotyped and dead. Fundamental advances will not be made, because, until they have been made, they will seem too doubtful to warrant the expenditure of public money upon them. Authority will be in the hands of the old, especially of men who have achieved scientific eminence; such men will be hostile to those among the young who do not flatter them by agreeing with their theories. Under a bureaucratic State Socialism it is to be feared that science would soon cease to be progressive and acquire a mediæval respect for authority.

But under a freer system, which would enable all kinds of groups to employ as many men of science as they chose, and would allow the "vagabond's wage" to those who desired to pursue some study so new as to be wholly unrecognized, there is every reason to think that science would flourish as it has never done hitherto. And if that were the case, I do not believe that any other obstacle would exist to the physical possibility of our system.

The question of the number of hours of work necessary to produce general material comfort is partly technical, partly one of organization. We may assume that there would no longer

be unproductive labour spent on armaments, national defence, advertisements, costly luxuries for the very rich, or any of the other futilities incidental to our competitive system. If each industrial Guild secured for a term of years the advantages, or part of the advantages, of any new invention or method which it introduced, it is pretty certain that every encouragement would be given to technical progress. The life of a discoverer or inventor is in itself agreeable: those who adopt it, as things are now, are seldom much actuated by economic motives, but rather by the interest of the work together with the hope of honour; and these motives would operate more widely than they do now, since fewer people would be prevented from obeying them by economic necessities. And there is no doubt that intellect would work more keenly and creatively in a world where instinct was less thwarted, where the joy of life was greater, and where consequently there would be more vitality in men than there is at present.

There remains the population question, which, ever since the time of Malthus, has been the last refuge of those to whom the possibility of a better world is disagreeable. But this question is now a very different one from what it was a hundred years ago. The decline of the birth-rate in all civilized countries, which is pretty certain to continue whatever economic system is adopted, suggests that, especially when the probable effects of the war are taken into account, the population of Western Europe is not likely to increase very much beyond its present level, and that of America is likely only to increase through immigration. Negroes may continue to increase in the tropics, but are not likely to be a serious menace to the white inhabitants of temperate regions. There remains, of course, the Yellow Peril; but by the time that begins to be serious, it is quite likely that the birth-rate will also have begun to decline among

the races of Asia. If not, there are other means of dealing with this question; and in any case the whole matter is too conjectural to be set up seriously as a bar to our hopes. I conclude that, though no certain forecast is possible, there is not any valid reason for regarding the possible increase of population as a serious obstacle to Socialism.

Our discussion has led us to the belief that the communal ownership of land and capital, which constitutes the characteristic doctrine of Socialism and Anarchist Communism, is a necessary step towards the removal of the evils from which the world suffers at present and the creation of such a society as any humane man must wish to see realized. But though a necessary step, Socialism alone is by no means sufficient. There are various forms of Socialism: the form in which the State is the employer and all who work receive wages from it involves dangers of tyranny and interference with progress which would make it, if possible, even worse than the present *régime*. On the other hand, Anarchism, which avoids the dangers of State Socialism, has dangers and difficulties of its own, which make it probable that, within any reasonable period of time, it could not last long even if it were established. Nevertheless it remains an ideal to which we should wish to approach as nearly as possible, and which, in some distant age, we hope may be reached completely. Syndicalism shares many of the defects of Anarchism, and, like it, would prove unstable, since the need of a central government would make itself felt almost at once.

The system we have advocated is a form of Guild Socialism, leaning more, perhaps, towards Anarchism than the official Guildsman would wholly approve. It is in the matters that politicians usually ignore—science and art, human relations, and the joy of life—that Anarchism is strongest, and it is chiefly

for the sake of these things that we included such more or less Anarchist proposals as the "vagabond's wage." It is by its effects outside economics and politics, at least as much as by effects inside them, that a social system should be judged. And if Socialism ever comes, it is only likely to prove beneficent if non-economic goods are valued and consciously pursued.

• The world that we must seek is a world in which the creative spirit is alive, in which life is an adventure full of joy and hope, based rather upon the impulse to construct than upon the desire to retain what we possess or to seize what is possessed by others. It must be a world in which affection has free play, in which love is purged of the instinct for domination, in which cruelty and envy have been dispelled by happiness and the unfettered development of all the instincts that build up life and fill it with mental delights. Such a world is possible; it waits only for men to wish to create it.

Meantime the world in which we exist has other aims. But it will pass away, burnt up in the fire of its own hot passions; and from its ashes will spring a new and younger world, full of fresh hope, with the light of morning in its eyes.

—*Bertrand Russell*

THE LEANING TOWER

Take away all that the working class has given to English literature and that literature would scarcely suffer; take away all that the educated class has given, and English literature would scarcely exist. Education must then play a very important part in a writer's work.

That seems so obvious that it is astonishing how little stress has been laid upon the writer's education. Perhaps it is because a writer's education is so much less definite than other educations. Reading, listening, talking, travel, leisure—many different things it seems are mixed together. Life and books must be shaken and taken in the right proportions. A boy brought up alone in a library turns into a bookworm; brought up alone in the fields, he turns into an earthworm. To breed the kind of butterfly a writer is you must let him sun himself for three or four years at Oxford or Cambridge—so it seems. However it is done, it is there that it is done—there that he is taught his art. And he has to be taught his art. Again, is that strange? Nobody thinks it strange if you say that a painter has to be taught his art; or a musician; or an architect. Equally a writer has to be taught. For the art of writing is at least as difficult as the other arts. And though, perhaps because the education is indefinite, people ignore this education, if you look closely you will see that almost every writer who has practised his art successfully had been taught it. He had been taught it by about eleven years of education—at private schools, public schools, and universities. He sits upon a tower raised above the rest of us: a tower built first on his parents'



station, then on his parents' gold. It is a tower of the utmost importance; it decides his angle of vision; it affects his power of communication.

All through the nineteenth century, down to August 1914, that tower was a steady tower. The writer was scarcely conscious either of his high station or of his limited vision. Many of them had sympathy, great sympathy, with other classes; they wished to help the working class to enjoy the advantages of the tower class; but they did not wish to destroy the tower, or to descend from it—rather to make it accessible to all. Nor had the model, human life changed essentially since Trollope looked at it, since Hardy looked at it: and Henry James, in 1914, was still looking at it. Also, the tower itself held firm beneath the writer during all the most impressionable years, when he was learning his art, and receiving all those complex influences and instructions that are summed up by the word education. These were conditions that influenced their work profoundly. For when the crash came in 1914 all these young men who were to be the representative writers of their time had their past, their education, safe behind them, safe within them. They had known security; they had the memory of a peaceful boyhood, the knowledge of a settled civilisation. Even though the war cut into their lives, and ended some of them, they wrote, and still write, as if the tower were firm beneath them. In one word, they are aristocrats; the unconscious inheritors of a great tradition. Put a page of their writing under the magnifying-glass and you will see, far away in the distance, the Greeks, the Romans; coming nearer, the Elizabethans; coming nearer still, Dryden, Swift, Voltaire, Jane Austen, Dickens, Henry James. Each, however much he differs individually from the others, is a man of education; a man who has learnt his art.

From that group let us pass to the next—to the group which began to write about 1925 and, it may be, came to an end as a group in 1939. If you read current literary journalism you will be able to rattle off a string of names—Day Lewis, Auden, Spender, Isherwood, Louis MacNeice, and so on. They adhere much more closely than the names of their predecessors. But at first sight there seems little difference, in station, in education. Mr. Auden in a poem written to Mr. Isherwood says: “Behind us we have stucco suburbs and expensive education.” They are tower dwellers like their predecessors, the sons of well-to-do parents, who could afford to send them to public schools and universities. But what a difference in the tower itself, in what they saw from the tower! When they looked at human life what did they see? Everywhere change; everywhere revolution. In Germany, in Russia, in Italy, in Spain, all the old hedges were being rooted up; all the old towers were being thrown to the ground. Other hedges were being planted; other towers were being raised. There was communism in one country; in another fascism. The whole of civilisation, of society, was changing. There was, it is true, neither war nor revolution in England itself. All those writers had time to write many books before 1939. But even in England towers that were built of gold and stucco were no longer steady towers. They were leaning towers. The books were written under the influence of change, under the threat of war. That perhaps is why the names adhere so closely; there was one influence that affected them all and made them, more than their predecessors, into groups. And that influence, let us remember, may well have excluded from that string of names the poets whom posterity will value most highly, either because they could not fall into step, as leaders or as followers, or because the influence was adverse to poetry, and until that influence

relaxed, they could not write. But the tendency that makes it possible for us to group the names of these writers together, and gives their work a common likeness, was the tendency of the tower they sat on—the tower of middle-class birth and expensive education—to lean.

Let us imagine, to bring this home to us, that we are actually upon a leaning tower and note our sensations. Let us see whether they correspond to the tendencies we observe in those poems, plays and novels. Directly we feel that a tower leans we become acutely conscious that we are upon a tower. All those writers, too, are acutely tower-conscious; conscious of their middle-class birth; of their expensive educations. Then when we come to the top of the tower how strange the view looks—not altogether upside-down, but slanting, sidelong. That, too, is characteristic of the leaning-tower writers; they do not look any class straight in the face; they look either up, or down, or sidelong. There is no class so settled that they can explore it unconsciously. That perhaps is why they create no characters. Then what do we feel next, raised in imagination on top of the tower? First, discomfort; next self-pity for that discomfort, which pity soon turns to anger—to anger against the builder, against society, for making us uncomfortable. Those, too, seem to be tendencies of the leaning-tower writers. Discomfort; pity for themselves; anger against society. And yet—here is another tendency—how can you altogether abuse a society that is giving you, after all, a very fine view and some sort of security? You cannot abuse that society wholeheartedly while you continue to profit by that society. And so very naturally you abuse society in the person of some retired admiral or spinster or armament manufacturer; and by abusing them hope to escape whipping yourself. The bleat of the scapegoat sounds loud in their work, and the whimper of the schoolboy crying,

" Please, sir, it was the other fellow, not me." Anger; pity; scapegoat-bleating; excuse-finding—these are all very natural tendencies; if we were in their position we should tend to do the same. But we are not in their position; we have not had eleven years of expensive education. We have only been climbing an imaginary tower. We can cease to imagine. We can come down.

But they cannot. They cannot throw away their education; they cannot throw away their upbringing. Eleven years at school and college have been stamped upon them indelibly. And then, to their credit but to their confusion, the leaning tower not only leant in the 'thirties, but it leant more and more to the left. Do you remember what Mr. MacCarthy said about his own group at the university in 1914?—" We were not very much interested in politics . . . philosophy was more interesting to us than public causes " ? That shows that his tower leant neither to the right nor to the left. But in 1930 it was impossible—if you were young, sensitive, imaginative—not to be interested in politics; not to find public causes of much more pressing interest than philosophy. In 1930 young men at college were forced to be aware of what was happening in Russia; in Germany; in Italy; in Spain. They could not go on discussing aesthetic emotions and personal relations. They could not confine their reading to the poets; they had to read the politicians. They read Marx. They became communists; they became anti-fascists. The tower they realised was founded upon injustice and tyranny; it was wrong for a small class to possess an education that other people paid for; wrong to stand upon the gold that a bourgeois father had made from his bourgeois profession. It was wrong; yet how could they make it right? Their education could not be thrown away; as for their capital—did Dickens, did Tolstoy ever throw away

their capital? Did D. H. Lawrence, a miner's son, continue to live like a miner? No; for it is death for a writer to throw away his capital; to be forced to earn his living in a mine or a factory. And thus, trapped by their education, pinned down by their capital, they remained on top of their leaning tower, and their state of mind as we see it reflected in their poems and plays and novels is full of discord and bitterness, full of confusion and of compromise

The influence of the films explains the lack of transitions in their work and the violently opposed contrasts. The influence of poets like Mr. Yeats and Mr. Eliot explains the obscurity. They took over from the elder poets a technique which, after many years of experiment, those poets used skilfully, and used it clumsily and often inappropriately. But we have time only to point to the most obvious influences; and these can be summed up as Leaning Tower Influences. If you think of them, that is, as people trapped on a leaning tower from which they cannot descend, much that is puzzling in their work is easier to understand. It explains the violence of their attack upon bourgeois society and also its half-heartedness. They are profiting by a society which they abuse. They are flogging a dead or dying horse because a living horse, if flogged, would kick them off its back. It explains the destructiveness of their work; and also its emptiness. They can destroy bourgeois society, in part at least; but what have they put in its place? How can a writer who has no first-hand experience of a towerless, of a classless society create that society? Yet as Mr. MacNeice bears witness, they feel compelled to preach, if not by their living, at least by their writing, the creation of a society in which everyone is equal and everyone is free. It explains the pedagogic, the didactic, the loud-speaker strain that dominates their poetry. They must teach; they must

preach. Everything is a duty—even love. Listen to Mr. Day Lewis ingeminating love. “Mr. Spender,” he says, “speaking from the living unit of himself and his friends appeals for the contraction of the social group to a size at which human contact may again be established and demands the destruction of all impediments to love. Listen.” And we listen to this:—

“We have come at last to a country
Where light equal, like shine from snow, strikes all faces.
Here you may wonder
How it was that works, money, interest, building could ever hide
The palpable and obvious love of man for man.”

We listen to oratory not to poetry. It is necessary, in order to feel the emotion of those lines, that other people should be listening too. We are in a group, in a class-room as we listen.

Listen now to Wordsworth:—

“Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.”

We listen to that when we are alone. We remember that in solitude. Is that the difference between politician's poetry and poet's poetry? We listen to the one in company; to the other when we are alone. But the poet in the 'thirties was forced to be a politician. That explains why the artist in the 'thirties was forced to be a scapegoat. If politics were “real,” the ivory tower was an escape from “reality.” That explains the curious bastard language in which so much of this leaning-tower prose and poetry is written. It is not the rich speech of the aristocrat: it is not the racy speech of the peasant. It is betwixt and between. The poet is a dweller in two worlds, one dying, the other struggling to be born. And so we come to

what is perhaps the most marked tendency of leaning-tower literature—the desire to be whole; to be human. “All that I would like to be is human”—that cry rings through their books—the longing to be closer to their kind, to write the common speech of their kind, to share the emotions of their kind, no longer to be isolated and exalted in solitary state upon their tower, but to be down on the ground with the mass of human kind.

These then, briefly and from a certain angle, are some of the tendencies of the modern writer who is seated upon a leaning tower. No other generation has been exposed to them. It may be that none has had such an appallingly difficult task. Who can wonder if they have been incapable of giving us great poems, great plays, great novels? They had nothing settled to look at; nothing peaceful to remember; nothing certain to come. During all the most impressionable years of their lives they were stung into consciousness—into self-consciousness, into class-consciousness, into the consciousness of things changing, of things falling, of death perhaps about to come. There was no tranquillity in which they could recollect. The inner mind was paralysed, because the surface mind was always hard at work.

Yet if they have lacked the creative power of the poet and the novelist, the power—does it come from a fusion of the two minds, the upper and the under?—that creates characters that live, poems that we all remember, they have had a power which, if literature continues, may prove to be of great value in the future. They have been great egotists. That, too, was forced upon them by their circumstances. When everything is rocking round one, the only person who remains comparatively stable is oneself. When all faces are changing and obscured, the only face one can see clearly is one's own. So they wrote about themselves—in their plays, in their poems, in their

novels. No other ten years can have produced so much autobiography as the ten years between 1930 and 1940. No one, whatever his class or his obscurity, seems to have reached the age of thirty without writing his autobiography. But the leaning-tower writers wrote about themselves honestly, therefore creatively. They told the unpleasant truths, not only the flattering truths. That is why their autobiography is so much better than their fiction or their poetry. Consider how difficult it is to tell the truth about oneself—the unpleasant truth; to admit that one is petty, vain, mean, frustrated, tortured, unfaithful, and unsuccessful. The nineteenth-century writers never told that kind of truth, and that is why so much of the nineteenth-century writing is worthless; why, for all their genius, Dickens and Thackeray seem so often to write about dolls and puppets, not about full-grown men and women; why they are forced to evade the main themes and make do with diversions instead. If you do not tell the truth about yourself you cannot tell it about other people. As the nineteenth century wore on, the writers knew that they were crippling themselves, diminishing their material, falsifying their object. "We are condemned," Stevenson wrote, "to avoid half the life that passes us by. What books Dickens could have written had he been permitted! Think of Thackeray as unfettered as Flaubert or Balzac! What books I might have written myself? But they give us a little box of toys and say to us, 'You mustn't play with anything but these'!" Stevenson blamed society—bourgeois society was his scapegoat too. Why did he not blame himself? Why did he consent to go on playing with his little box of toys?

The leaning-tower writer has had the courage, at any rate, to throw that little box of toys out of the window. He has had the courage to tell the truth, the unpleasant truth, about



himself. That is the first step towards telling the truth about other people. By analysing themselves honestly, with help from Dr. Freud, these writers have done a great deal to free us from nineteenth-century suppressions. The writers of the next generation may inherit from them a whole state of mind, a mind no longer crippled, evasive, divided. They may inherit that unconsciousness which as we guessed—it is only a guess—is necessary if writers are to get beneath the surface, and write something that people remember when they are alone. For that great gift of unconsciousness the next generation will have to thank the creative and honest egotism of the leaning-tower group.

—*Virginia Woolf*

27.7.55